

Hafa Adai!

VOX POPULI: What do you think of the impending TikTok ban? **PAGE 2**  
DPS responds to over 100 calls last week. **PAGE 4**

\$1

# Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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## DPL backs new lease for Coral Ocean Resort

### IN BRIEF

- » Suwaso Corp. will get another 40-year lease;
- » Over \$30M to be invested, including building 200 rooms and villas;
- » \$1.8M in public benefits contribution

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER



Santos

The Department of Public Lands supports granting a new land lease to Suwaso Corp. to allow its Coral Ocean Resort's operation to continue for another 40 years, with an investment of over \$30 million.

See DPL on Page 3



FERDIE DE LA TORRE

In this file photo taken on Dec. 3, 2019, workers are seen doing repair work at the Coral Ocean Resort building in As Gonno.

### 'CUC water loss currently at 60%, but is steadily decreasing rate'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

water and wastewater division Kevin Watson on Tuesday.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s non-revenue water loss on Saipan is currently at 60%, but CUC is steadily decreasing that number, according to CUC deputy executive director for



Watson

In response to questions by Sen. Karl King-Nabors (R-Tinian) during a Senate special committee meeting, Watson said water that is not earning CUC any

See CUC on Page 3

## 'More cruise ships now visiting Micronesia'

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

have recently swung by Saipan for daylong port calls have boosted the CNMI's arrival numbers, but that trend

The many cruise ships that

has been happening not only in the CNMI but also other regions in Micronesia.

Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Chris Concepcion disclosed that he learned during the last Pacific Asia Travel Association-Micronesia Chapter conference on Saipan that not only has the Marianas seen a boost in

cruise ship arrivals, but so has other regions in Micronesia.

"Historically, Saipan and Guam have been visited by cruise ships [regularly] but we are seeing an increase in cruise ship arrivals in other islands in Micronesia. It's really good for the region and for each jurisdiction. We are very



Concepcion

See MORE on Page 4

## Ex-IPI workers seek over \$1M default judgment vs. former employer

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

A group of former Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC workers who

are suing their former employer for breach of contract over unpaid benefits have filed a motion for default judgment against the casino investor.

Former IPI construction workers

Özcan Genç, Hasan Gökçe, and Süleyman Kös—on behalf of other Turkish workers of IPI—through lawyer Richard Miller, have filed a second motion

See WORKERS on Page 3

### INSIDE



#### LOCAL

The team of Deep Sea Vision were out to solve the greatest aviation mystery of all: the disappearance of Amelia Earhart on July 2, 1937, during her epic flight around the world.

PAGE 9



#### WORLD

Explosions and shootings shook the Gaza Strip's biggest hospital and surrounding neighborhoods as Israeli forces stormed through the facility for a second day Tuesday.

PAGE 10



#### LIFE & STYLE

Jonathan Majors' former girlfriend sued him Tuesday on civil allegations including assault, battery, defamation and infliction of emotional distress, three months after the actor was convicted in a criminal trial of assaulting her in New York City.

PAGE 11



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## Local

## VOX POPULI

## What do you think of the impending TikTok ban?

By SAIPAN TRIBUNE STAFF

The U.S. Congress has passed a bill proposing to ban the popular social media platform TikTok. The app, which gained popularity at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, became a haven for many who were subjected to isolation as it provided a positive space to drown out the negativity that plagued the world. Now, with its impending ban in the United States, *Saipan Tribune* took to the community to ask what they think of this possible ban.



“The debate over a potential ban on a popular social media platform known as TikTok over national security is a hot topic right now in the U.S. Congress, and there’s no clear consensus on a federal ban.

“I have no position on the federal ban as I do not have a TikTok account, nor do I plan to create one.

“On one side, many fear the Chinese government could access user data or manipulate content to influence individuals. There are also serious concerns that user information collected by TikTok could be misused by its parent company, ByteDance.

“On the other hand, a ban could be seen as a censorship and limit free expression on a popular platform. Some argue a ban wouldn’t stop people from using TikTok through virtual private networks (VPNs) or that a ban could hurt businesses and creators who rely on TikTok.

“The bill still needs approval from President Biden before becoming law.”

—Sen. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan)

“I understand why there is a movement to ban the platform.



“In 2020, the U.S. Army and Navy banned the application on government devices over national security concerns regarding the access the application has to users’ locations, contact lists, media files, and more.

“The application is owned by a tech company called ByteDance, which must give any and all data it collects to the Chinese government upon request.

“I am, however, concerned about the effectiveness of the intended outcome given the fact that so many U.S. companies such as X, Meta, and Amazon collect and sell data to multinational corporations.”

—Sen. Karl Rosario King-Nabors (R-Tinian)



“I had just come to Saipan at the time and I was just getting into the groove of meeting new people, seeing what was out there for me. Then the pandemic hit. I was forced into isolation, with my only time outside being when I had to buy groceries. Even then, it was short. I felt so lonely without human contact. However, on the days I felt so alone at home, TikTok was there to put a smile on my face. There was a never-ending sea of videos, be it trendy dances, crafty ideas, different meals to try and replicate, and the list goes on. [With the possible ban of TikTok] it would be like the end of an era, like MySpace or Vine. It’s sad but I guess if it happens, it happens.”

—Chlaryze Mae Santos, Garapan

“Being someone who spends a lot of time on TikTok, the idea

of it getting banned makes me really, really sad. TikTok is more than another app on my phone. It is a part of my everyday routine. Whether I’m relaxing on the sofa after a tiring day at work or looking for something to laugh at, TikTok is where I turn to.

“During the peak of COVID-19 and quarantine, TikTok felt like a lifeline for me. It’s where I’ve connected with people who share my interests in dancing, cooking, and more. It’s like having a community at my fingertips.



“Beyond entertainment, TikTok has been incredibly helpful for me when seeking product recommendations or learning about health issues. With a health condition that’s uncommon [on] a small island like Saipan, finding relevant information was tough until TikTok came into play. TikTok has been a valuable resource in guiding me on what foods to eat and providing health tips. I was even able to identify my condition by watching TikTok videos shared by others with experiences.

“Seeing real people share their experiences has changed how I look at aspects of life. If TikTok does get banned, it would not just be losing an app. It would be like losing a part of anyone’s life. It’s more than a platform now. It’s become essential in connecting with others and gaining insights that go beyond the world.”

—Christine Elchico, Finasisu



“I heard about the possible ban and it’s so crazy. I feel like [this generation] gets news and trends from TikTok. I feel like a lot of people and businesses use it too. I think they would suffer a lot from losing TikTok.”

—Erica Bacud, Chalan Kiya

“I hate how they are going to take away something that kept me sane during the COVID-19 era. My TikTok page is filled with things that keeps me motivated and [encourages] self-love. It’s very therapeutic. For me personally, the thing about TikTok is that I could have access to shops that are actually really money-saving and are actually good quality. It also is yet again another therapeutic thing for me to be scrolling on TikTok. It keeps people entertained and happy.”

—Joshua Dungca, China Town



“There’s other problems [the U.S. Congress] needs to focus  
See TIKTOK on Page 4

## CONGRESSMAN GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

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/s/Henry S. Hofschneider, Chairman



# DPS responds to over 100 calls last week

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety responded to over 100 calls last week, including 95 criminal-related incidents and 30 traffic-related incidents.

According to the police blotter dated March 10-16,

DPS responded to a total of 125 calls last week and made 14 arrests.

The police blotter states that police responded to three assault incidents; eight assault and battery incidents; one assault with a dangerous weapon incident; three nuisance incidents; nine do-

mestic violence incidents; 45 disturbing the peace incidents; two criminal trespass incidents; two child abuse/neglect incidents; two illegal possession incidents; four burglary incidents; 15 theft incidents; and one sexual assault incident.

As for traffic incidents, the

DPS police blotter reports that police responded to seven auto run off roadway incidents; seven auto parked vehicle incident; three auto hit and run incidents; three driving under the influence incidents; eight auto fixed object incidents; and two vehicle theft incidents.

DPS spokesperson Fred Sato previously said that as part of DPS' goals, it has decided to issue weekly police blotter reports that detail the number of reports made in the last week, what incidents were reported, and how many arrests were made in that week.

"I think it's important for the public to know what our officers are doing on a daily basis," said Sato.

Sato added that the numbers provided based on the blotter reports are calls made to DPS and response of its officers.

"All active criminal complaints are taken, then forwarded to our Criminal Investigation Bureau. All traffic-related incidents, including fatality reported crashes, are forwarded to our Highway Patrol Investigation units," he said.

## DPL

From page 3

Suwaso also promises to provide financial assistance for eligible Northern Marianas Descent students.

The company also pledges to give \$5,000 each year to the Indigenous Affairs Office and Carolinian Affairs Office to support activities to promote the Chamorro and Carolinian cultures, language, and arts.

Suwaso also pledges to buy, install, and maintain a new children's park.

Santos said a total of \$25 million will be invested by Suwaso for renovations of existing structures and new

improvements on the Coral Ocean Resort premises. Santos said Suwaso plans to further repair and renovate existing buildings damaged by past super typhoons. She said new improvements include the construction of 200 rooms and villas, the Spanish Garden, a Golf Starter Building, Beach Club, New Restaurant, and an upgraded swimming pool.

A public notice of the proposed lease was issued in local newspapers eight times within a 15-day period for the community to submit comments to support or oppose the new lease. Santos said the comment period closed on Feb. 12, 2024, and one comment was submitted opposing the lease.

She said DPL also held public hearings on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, and six community members testified in support of Suwaso's new lease.

Santos pointed out that if DPL seeks a new investor, the

properties will sit vacant with no income generation and the longer the property remains vacant, DPL will shoulder the expenses of maintaining and securing the property.

At present, the monthly

expenses incurred by DPL for basic maintenance and security at the former Mariana Resort property is a minimum of \$24,000, she said. This amount is significant and DPL cannot afford to

incur expenses for properties that do not generate income, she added.

A longer version of this story is available at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com)

## WORKERS

From page 3

damages have previously been stipulated to be \$1,500 per ticket. The requested damages are \$127,500 for 85 workers," said the motion.

The plaintiffs also allege that they were not given the paid

leave they were promised.

"Workers were promised that if they worked for six months, they would earn six days paid leave. A total of 85 workers completed at least six months' work (13 biweekly pay periods). These workers are owed a total of \$39,050.40," said the motion.

Lastly, the workers want damages for the repatriation cost as required under the contract they signed with IPI.

"Twelve of the class members would like to request compensation for repatriation airfare and daily subsistence. The undersigned is given to understand that, previously, IPI offered to pay

for repatriation airfare of all the class members and did pay for such airfare for most of those who returned to Turkey," said the motion.

The court has set a hearing on the matter for April 25, at 10am before U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona.

## MORE

From page 1

happy that these ships stop in our islands within our region and contribute to the economy of the islands they visit," he said.

Saipan Tribune learned that other Western Pacific nations like Palau are seeing an increase in cruise ship arrivals, but in the case of the CNMI, both the MVA and the Commonwealth Ports Authority are working hand in hand to attract more cruise ships to visit.

"We look forward to welcoming more. We are working with CPA who has jurisdiction over the ports to attract more ships. It's a nice boost to the businesses on the islands. These visitors stay for only a day but they go out, they shop, they eat, and the money spent helps our economy. We are expecting more, and we're working closely with CPA on this," he said.

Concepcion encourages local businesses to fill the current need for more authentic local products for visiting tourists.

"We get comments that tourists want to see more local foods, more local arts and crafts, and we welcome any opportunity for the private sector to step up and provide that. We encourage the private sector to step up and fill that need. We can't force the private sector to produce products that people seek, but we do encour-

age it. We coordinate for local artists and local food vendors to station themselves at the seaport upon arrival of the cruise ships. It's all done by our group. We invite local artists [and] food vendors to sell their products and promote their products," he said.

Saipan's most recent visitor was the NYK Cruises' *Asuka II*, which made port call on Saipan last March 4.

*Asuka II*'s visit came just a week after the last cruise ship visit, the *M/S Artania*, which made its maiden voyage to Saipan last Feb. 26, bringing in over 1,500 visitors.

Prior to the *M/S Artania*, the *M/S Zuiderdam* visited Saipan and brought in over 1,000 passengers. Holland America Line's *M/S Zuiderdam*, a mid-size cruise ship, made its first voyage to Saipan back in February.

The largest cruise ship the CNMI saw this year was the *MSC Bellissima*, which brought nearly 4,000 Japanese tourists to Saipan last Jan. 4 for a day.

Thanks to these cruise ship visits, the CNMI's tourism industry has been energized with over 7,000 visitors getting off the ships to see what Saipan has to offer.

During each visit, vendors lined up at the Port of Saipan with their goods, ready to give visitors a taste of the CNMI's food and culture. Dive companies, tour guides, and Mañagaha Island charters also lined up at the port, ready to accommodate the visitors.

## TIKTOK

From page 2



on. Why are they focusing on social media? TikTok can be a good platform to spread important information. The TikTok ban would impact others trying to spread awareness on the more serious issues of the world. It doesn't make sense that they're focusing on a social media platform when there are real-life problems that will also affect us."

—Chareese Lazaga, Capital Hill

"TikTok is one of the popular social media platforms where people can freely express their thoughts and feelings about everything without the government manipulating it in any way. Me, along with many others, find it very ridiculous that, instead of listening to the complaints that people have in this app they instead decide to get rid of the complaint box. To those who follow and pay attention to politics and are aware of what's going on in Gaza I think it's very obvious to say that the TikTok ban isn't about China. If they were so scared of being influenced by communist China, why is there "made in China" on so many products and why are they still doing business with China? It's simple. It was never about China. They want to get rid of the app because it is a dominant news source for people under the age of 30, which matters lot to the American representatives because they took thousands of dollars from AIPAC and is complicit in a genocide being livestreamed on this app and because they are losing trust from the younger generation of Americans. TikTok is one of the reasons why Israel is losing the info wars because statistically, pro-Palestinian content is viewed far more because this is an app of free expression that can't be manipulated by any government. They want to get rid of this app so they can spread propaganda and not let people's voices be heard."

—Eitmam Chowdhury, Marianas High School senior



"Personally, as a high school senior I think that the TikTok ban is great. I feel like it's a waste of time when I used to scroll through similar apps in the past, and from my experience, it has negatively affected my performance in school and other activities. I feel like more people now with the ban, especially the youth and some adults, will find that their lives will become more productive. Although, I still feel quite sad because TikTok was kind of funny."

—Phil Gases, Marianas High School senior



"If TikTok shuts down it puts at risk a lot of creators who put a lot of time and effort into making their content. It was how I got my start back in 2021.

—Simon Necesito, Dandan Middle School teacher

"Since I started using TikTok, it's always been actually a very controversial app. I'm multi-platform, so not only do I post on Instagram, but also on Facebook and TikTok, but TikTok was actually the app where I first started And so I can see from a perspective of the U.S. passing a bill that it's (TikTok) unsafe, just because it's not a U.S.-based app. And if it is for the public safety, I do agree that it should be banned if there's data that the U.S. has no control on where the data is going and to how it's being used.

"In retrospect, I think if it's a safe move, maybe that is the most positive thing that they should do, right? Being that we live in a time where things are constantly changing all the time, if it's only right that we do get rid of something that has a negative impact on...our society and the U.S., then maybe [they] can look into it a little bit more.

"But I already know it's going to be very controversial as it is, because I'm just one of...billions of people that are using TikTok. So maybe my voice might make a little bit of a change in perspective, but I am not sure how I feel about the whole thing, because, like I said, my content is based on TikTok, too. So I think it's going to be a sensitive topic to talk about...because we all love TikTok, right? It's just something that most of us use on a daily basis. So I think, yeah, that's going to be very challenging to accept if they do ban it."

—Joshua Villagomez (josh\_v98)

Social media influencer with 11.3k followers on IG, 45.4 followers and 1.2M likes on Tiktok



"As a teen who mostly spends her quality time on social media and also grew up with the app...I think that banning TikTok will affect many people within my age group that grew up using it because TikTok allowed us to be creative with new trends. On the other hand I wouldn't say it would be so bad because many social platforms have been updated offering what TikTok used to for us such as Instagram, Facebook, and even YouTube reels."

—Jerac Oronigo, San Vicente



Judiciary's Commonwealth Recorder launches search feature for e-recording system

The Judiciary of the Northern Mariana Islands is launching an online land document search platform through its Commonwealth Recorder's e-recording system. The search feature will be activated on Wednesday, March 27, 2024, at website CRO.NMIJudiciary.gov.

This search engine is the first of its kind in the Pacific region, allowing users to conduct research, make payments, and download land documents directly to their devices.

In its initial phase, land documents ranging from years 2017 to 2024 will be available for search, and the website will be

regularly updated to include older land documents.

"This platform will allow the public to search land documents conveniently from their homes via phones, laptops, and any other electronic devices capable of internet access," said Chief Justice Alexander C. Castro. "This is an important accomplishment in the Judiciary-wide digitization project."


The research application comes with fees pursuant to the Judiciary Fee Schedule, Administrative Order No. 2017-ADM-0003-MS, and Administrative Order No. 2022-ADM-0018-MS, available

at <https://cnmilaw.org/pdf/orders/adm/2021-ADM-0005.pdf>.

The Commonwealth Recorder's Office will offer a training session for the public on Wednesday, March 27, 2024. This project was made possible through American Rescue Plan Act funds. For more information on the search feature or the training, contact Kelsey G. Aldan at the Commonwealth Recorder's Office at (670) 236-9833 or (670) 783-4981, or via email at [Kelsey.Aldan@NMIJudiciary.gov](mailto:Kelsey.Aldan@NMIJudiciary.gov). You may also contact acting director of courts Matthew J. Brown at [Matthew.Brown@NMIJudiciary.gov](mailto:Matthew.Brown@NMIJudiciary.gov). (PR)


No.	Description	Recorder's Fee		E-Recording Service Provider Fee		Credit Card Transaction Fee
		1st Page	Per Add'l Page	1st Page	Per Add'l Page	
1	Recording of Land Records	\$ 20.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 12.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.50
2	Recording of Maps	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 12.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.50
3	Recording of Marriage Certificate	\$ 25.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 12.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.50
4	Recording of UCC-1	\$ 20.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 12.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.50
5	Recording of UCC-2	\$ 20.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 12.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.50
6	Request for UCC-3	\$ 20.00	-	\$ 12.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.50
7	Marriage Record Certification	\$ 25.00	-	\$ 12.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.50
8	Single Status/Letter of No Record	\$ 25.00	-	\$ 12.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.50
9	True Copy Certification	\$ 25.00	-	\$ 12.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.50
10	Digital Copies - Land Records	\$ 1.00	\$ 1.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.50
11	Digital Copies - UCC Records	\$ 2.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.50
12	Digital Copies - Maps	\$ 50.00	-	\$ 2.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.50

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Breakdown of fees for the new Commonwealth Recorder's e-recording system.



DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES

CNMI GOVERNMENT



INVITATION TO BID

ITB NO.: ITB24-DPW/ED-42400076

SUBMISSION DATE: APRIL 11, 2024

TIME: 09:00 A.M.

“OFFICE SPACE LEASE FOR DPW,

ENERGY DIVISION”

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL (<https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/>) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT BLDG NO. 12552, ANATAHAN DRIVE, CAPTIOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, ENERGY DIVISION BY APRIL 4, 2024, TO MR. VINCENT ATTAO VIA EMAIL AT [v.attao@cnmienergy.gov.mp](mailto:v.attao@cnmienergy.gov.mp)

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.


THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ THELMA B. INOS


DIRECTOR, DPW-ENERGY DIVISION

/S/ GERALDINE T. CRUZ

ACTING DIRECTOR, PS



NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING



for

SPP LLC dba Canna

Saipan Lounge

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. SPP LLC dba Canna Saipan Lounge proposes to utilize **one (1)** unit on the ground floor of an existing three-story building measuring **44'-8" (L) x 14' 11" (W)** for its "Cannabis Lounge" Use. This use is permitted in the area as a Conditional Use. The site is located on Lot No. 009 D 67 in the village of Garapan. This area is zoned as Tourist Resort.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date:

April 4, 2024

Time:

2:00 pm

Place:


Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 3pm, April 3, 2024. Please send written comments via e-mail to [zoningboard@cnmizoning.com](mailto:zoningboard@cnmizoning.com), via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, at 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).


For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/

Henry S. Hofschneider, Chairman



NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING



for

Da Green Door

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Da Green Door proposes to develop **Two (2)** ocean freight shipping containers measuring **42' .10" (L) x 20' (W) x 10' .5" (H)** for its "Cannabis Retail" Use. This use is permitted in the area as a Conditional Use. The site is located on Lot No. 008 D 17 in the village of Garapan. This area is zoned as Tourist Resort.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date:

April 4, 2024

Time:

2:00 pm


Place:

Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 3pm, April 3, 2024. Please send written comments via e-mail to [zoningboard@cnmizoning.com](mailto:zoningboard@cnmizoning.com), via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, at 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).


For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013

/s/ Henry Hofschneider, Chairman



DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES

CNMI GOVERNMENT



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP NO.: RFP24-OPD/MOTA-42400072

SUBMISSION DATE: APRIL 23, 2024

TIME: 10:00 A.M.

“ASSESSMENT, DESIGN AND PERMITTING OF THE

TINIAN (PUNTAN DIABLO) SMALL COMMUNITY

EXEMPT LANDFILL (SCEL)”

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL (<https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/>) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT BLDG NO. 12552, ANATAHAN DRIVE, CAPTIOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP CAN BE MADE TO THE OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BY APRIL 12, 2024, VIA EMAIL AT [planning@opd.gov.mp](mailto:planning@opd.gov.mp)

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.


THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ELIZABETH BALAJADIA


ACTING DIRECTOR, OPD

/S/ GERALDINE T. CRUZ

ACTING DIRECTOR, PS



NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING



for

LK Corporation

dba Gualo Rai Guest House

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. LK Corporation dba Gualo Rai Guest House proposes to utilize **Three (3)** units measuring **66' 3" (L) x 23' 2" (W)** on the 2nd floor of an existing two-story building for its "Hotel/Motel/Guest House- Guest House" Use. This use is permitted in the area as a Conditional Use. The site is located on Lot No. 1877-1-3 in the village of Gualo Rai. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date:

April 4, 2024

Time:

2:00 pm


Place:

Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center


Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 3pm, April 3, 2024. Please send written comments via e-mail to [zoningboard@cnmizoning.com](mailto:zoningboard@cnmizoning.com), via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, at 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Henry Hofschneider, Chairman



NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING



for

SPP LLC dba

Canna Saipan Retail

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. SPP LLC dba Canna Saipan Retail proposes to utilize **one (1)** unit measuring **44'-8" (L) x 15' 3" (W)** on the ground floor of an existing three-story building for its "Cannabis Retail" Use. This use is permitted in the area as a Conditional Use. The site is located on Lot No. 009 D 67 in the village of Garapan. This area is zoned as Tourist Resort.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date:

April 4, 2024

Time:

2:00 pm

Place:

Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 3pm, April 3, 2024. Please send written comments via e-mail to [zoningboard@cnmizoning.com](mailto:zoningboard@cnmizoning.com), via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, at 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Henry S. Hofschneider, Chairman



# Opinion

Hafa Adair

## Saipan Tribune

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MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

### EDITORIAL

## The clock ticks for Chinese ownership of TikTok. Good

There are any number of reasons to despise TikTok, the mind-numbing entity best known not for keeping friends in touch but an endless stream of short-form videos algorithmically tuned with unerring precision to satisfy the tastes of the user. Excessive consumption has become known as “doom scrolling,” a reference to the overstimulated feeling of pointless saturation that has afflicted many a teen and infuriated many a parent.

Over the last week or two, you might have seen mostly risible advertisements wherein worthy folks like medical professionals offer testimony as to how TikTok helped their work or saved lives. Those are part of a massive lobbying campaign by the Chinese-owned advertising juggernaut with 2023 revenue estimated to be \$14.3 billion.

TikTok now has reason to be worried. Democratic U.S. Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, who represents much of Chicago's western and northwest suburbs, has had TikTok and its parent company, ByteDance, in his sights for some time. He has joined up with Republican Rep. Mike Gallagher, who represents the 8th District in Wisconsin, to persuade Congress to force the Chinese either to sell TikTok or see it banned in the U.S.

Both men talked to us Thursday, and it's clear they are making rare, bipartisan progress. The House voted 352-65 for the bill on Wednesday, an overwhelming margin for a chamber better known for its dysfunction than its ability to act decisively on issues of consequence. The administration of President Joe Biden supports the effort, which requires Senate approval before it reaches the president's desk.

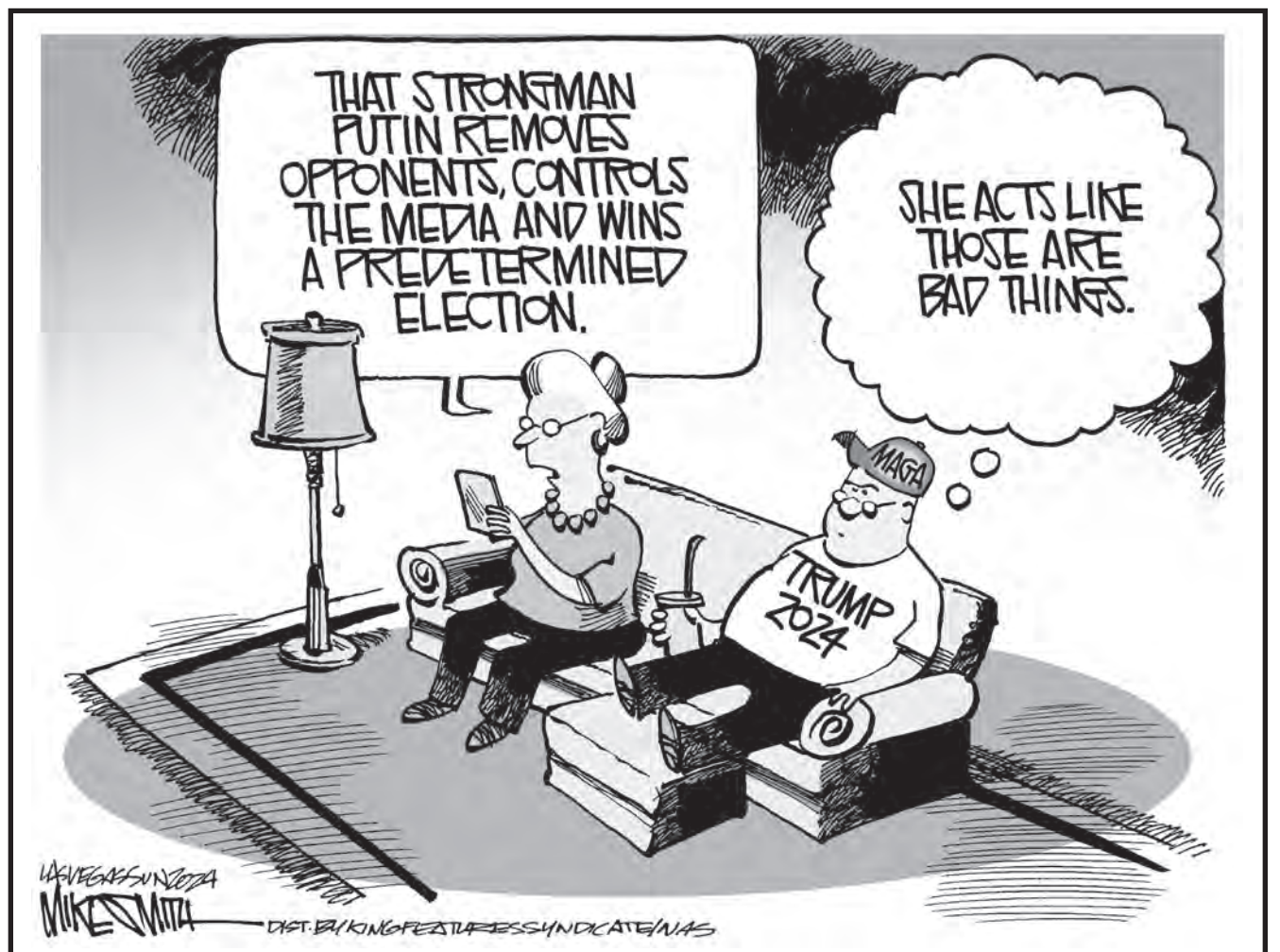
We're not generally in favor of limiting any American's choice of what channel to watch, and we're leery of government inference in any kind of cultural content, even lip-syncing videos. If TikTok, only available since 2017, was not highly effective at what it does, it would not have 1.5 billion global users each month. We've heard from those involved in social media that its algorithmic precision is without peer and while we decry the lack of transparency in its algorithm, especially when it comes to kids, that's also true of other U.S.-based competitors.

A good case can be made that TikTok adds to U.S. divisiveness by amplifying a user's existing point of view (as distinct from serving up content to challenge their perceptions), thus pushing them closer to the extremes. But in a free society, that's not a clear reason for a ban. The solution there is better education in critical thinking.

But let's be clear here: Gallagher and Krishnamoorthi came armed with plenty of very good reasons for Congress to take action, especially since for many young Americans TikTok is not just for fun but a primary source of news.

“TikTok is beholden to and controlled by the Chinese Communist Party,” Krishnamoorthi told us. “Any content critical of the CCP is repressed.” That throttling includes, the congressman continued, anything to do with the freedom of Taiwan, the status of Tibet, the potential Chinese origins of COVID-19 and, of course, anything relating to Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Gallagher noted evidence that TikTok does not have verifiable safeguards in place for its huge trove of user data, opening users up to blackmail or espionage, given how much TikTok knows about their tastes and proclivities.

See **CLOCK** on Page 7

## Aging comes with stigma. Let's admire the defiant

Who do you want to be when you grow old?

Increasingly, senior citizens decide to keep working, including the two front-runners for the 2024 presidential election. Because many Americans consider the candidates too old for the job, age has become part of the national conversation.

Both Joe Biden, 81, and Donald Trump, 77, would be the oldest presidents at the end of their terms. Each has addressed his age quite differently this month.

In a new presidential campaign ad, Biden states, “Look, I’m not a young guy. That’s no secret. But here’s the deal. I understand how to get things done for the American people.”

In his Super Tuesday speech, Trump nodded to young people in the Palm Beach, Florida, audience who had “big futures” ahead. “I’d love to be your age,” he said. “I’d pay you a lot of money to be your age.”

Other octogenarians have long been leaders in Congress. Mitch McConnell, 82, will step down as Senate GOP leader in November; former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, 83, plans to seek reelection.

Bernie Sanders, 82, is serving his third term in the Senate after 16 years in the House; Iowa’s Chuck Grassley, 90, is the oldest sitting senator; and Illinois’ long-serving Sen. Dick Durbin turns 80 in November.

Beyond Washington, senior citizen role models keep distinguished vocations. Warren Buffett, 93, is considered one of the greatest investors ever. He continues to serve as chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway.

Martha Stewart, who heads a media conglomerate, improbably became the oldest model to pose on the cover of Sports Illustrated. Stewart, 82, said, “I want other women to feel like they could also be on the cover of Sports Illustrated.”

Not an objective you’d seek? What about accomplishing a goal you failed earlier? Consider Diana Nyad, the subject of the Netflix film “Nyad.” At age 64, she became the first person to swim from Cuba to Florida, accomplishing the feat she first attempted at age 28.

Or do you want to take your art and point of view to a different generation? Activist-artist Faith Ringgold, 93, whose retrospective just ended at Chicago’s Museum of Contemporary Art, wrote more than 15 illustrated children’s books, including the bestselling “Tar Beach,” which was published in 1991 when she was 61. It won more than 30 awards, including the Caldecott Honor.

In the entertainment industry, examples abound of long careers.

At the Oscars, Rita Moreno, 92, wowed on the red carpet and nailed her address to best-supporting-actress nominee America Ferrera. Moreno’s 2023 film, “80 for Brady,” also starred two legends

By **CHRISTINE LEDBETTER**  
Chicago Tribune

Christine Ledbetter is a former senior arts editor at The Washington Post who lives in Illinois, where she writes about culture and politics.



in their 80s, Jane Fonda, 86, and Lily Tomlin, 84.

At the Feb. 4 Grammy Awards, Joni Mitchell’s rendition of “Both Sides Now,” was greeted with tears and rapturous applause. Her performance of the song is markedly different at 80 than when she first recorded it in 1969 in her mid-20s. Back then, she sang it as if she frolicked in grassy fields; now, her voice scorches the earth.

Across the country, the Rolling Stones’ upcoming stadium tour this summer is selling out—they come to Chicago in June. Both Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, 80, still have the moves.

For those who do retire, many find it’s not enough to play pickleball, travel and spend time with the grandchildren. Because eventually, the sands of time feel like hail drops, and at some point, we’re all awaiting the final diagnosis. If you believe the final act is the last chance to leave a legacy, look to former President Jimmy Carter for a master class in aging with purpose, dignity and humility.

Indeed, his post-presidential life was more successful than his presidency. After facing international challenges such as the Iran hostage crisis and domestic difficulties including inflation, he and Rosalynn left Washington in 1981 to return to their home in Plains, Georgia.

Instead of accepting lucrative speaking gigs to enrich himself, he quietly championed the causes he cared about.

He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002, built homes with Habitat for Humanity and established the Carter Center to advance human rights. He wrote at least 30 books and taught Sunday school until 2020 at the Maranatha Baptist Church.

Now 99, he is in hospice, having ended medical intervention for cancer.

“I have one life and one chance to make it count for something. ... My faith requires that I do whatever I can, wherever I am, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference,” Carter said. And that is exactly how he lived his life.

In these troubled times, and certainly in the campaign days ahead, it may help to meditate on his quote.

Faith, service, making a difference. A mantra to grow old by.



**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

## The US is at its best when it learns from its mistakes

**L**earning from your mistakes isn't just something that applies to your personal life—it's a core lesson of political science. Ten years before the Framers of our Constitution gathered in Philadelphia to draft a new governing document, they adopted the Articles of Confederation. Our Founding Fathers were so assured of its success that they intended it to last in perpetuity. Forever, in this case, was a decade.

The Framers realized that their best effort to design a workable government clashed with the necessities of a changing nation. Here's a short list of choices they quickly came to regret.

First, Congress operated like the United Nations—representatives were paid and selected by states; unsurprisingly, this led to representatives having little to no interest in supporting any legislation that negatively affected their respective states. Second, they vested all power in a single branch of government; their concern about a single executive (think King George) having too much power led them to avoid creating an executive branch and to instead place all power in the legislative branch. Third, even if the people realized a need to amend the Articles they could only do so upon all states agreeing to the change; as you may imagine, reaching consensus among 13 states is nearly impossible.

Fortunately for us, the Articles did not last for eternity. The Framers relatively quickly learned from their mistakes. They rallied to vastly improve upon their first go at creating a country. The second time around they incentivized our representatives to think nationally as well as locally; they created three branches of government and reduced their odds of concentrating power by developing a series of checks and balances; and, they lowered the

threshold to amend the Constitution.

That rapid pace of learning, though, has not carried into the 21st century. Consider that we're currently in the third longest drought between constitutional amendments. Sixty-one years passed between the ratification of the 12th and 13th amendments; after the 15th Amendment, it took another 43 years before the ratification of the 16th; and it has been more than decades since we ratified the 27th Amendment in 1992. In the interim, nations around the world have taken meaningful steps to improve their democracies—their reforms, minimally, deserve close scrutiny from all those who want American democracy to remain as representative, deliberative and responsive as possible.

Thankfully, a group of scholars from across the political spectrum has already done a lot of our democratic homework for us. Convened by the National Constitution Center in 2022, this group closely studied ways America can improve our democracy by learning not only from our past but also from the democratic endeavors of other countries. Despite their ideological differences, these constitutional experts reached consensus on five potential amendments to the Constitution:

■ ■ ■

First, eliminating the natural-born citizen requirement for an individual to serve as president. In an age of globalization, why not allow the most qualified candidates to run for any office—regardless of whether they were born here or choose America to be their home?

Second, making it a bit easier to amend the Constitution. At a time of novel and significant problems arising, it makes sense to increase the odds of responsive and responsible

**“ Though the Constitution itself is surely one of the greatest gifts left by its Framers, even more valuable is the gift of their example of democratic experimentation. ”**

**By KEVIN FRAZIER**  
The Fulcrum

*Kevin Frazier is an assistant professor at the Crump College of Law at St. Thomas University. Starting this summer, he will serve as a Tarbell fellow.*



adjustments to the Constitution, right?

Third, providing Congress with the chance to veto agency rules prior to their enactment. Such a "legislative veto" was a popular means for Congress to check the administrative state prior to the Supreme Court declaring the practice unconstitutional.

Fourth, clarifying when and how officials may be impeached—a constitutional law question that has puzzled scholars for decades, if not centuries.

And, fifth, imposing an 18-year term limit on Supreme Court justices. Given the increasing importance of Supreme Court decisions on social, political and economic affairs, this change may help restore faith in this essential institution.

■ ■ ■

You may agree with all of these or none of these amendments—that's fine. These suggestions—reached by an ideologically diverse set of really smart people—are not intended to open and close the conversation on how to make sure our Constitution has the checks and balances required by the 21st century. Let's instead use this list of five to revive our willingness to closely study the health of our democracy, our Constitution and our political community. Though the Constitution itself is surely one of the greatest gifts left by its Framers, even more valuable is the gift of their example of democratic experimentation.

## Marry rich. That's the Republican plan for moms

**T**he Republican Party is making yet another appeal to mothers, hoping to get them in Donald Trump's camp ahead of this year's presidential election. As Alabama Senator Katie Britt put it in her State of the Union rebuttal, "we are the party of hardworking parents and families. We want to give you and your children the opportu-

nities to thrive—and we want families to grow."

Don't buy it. Judging from Republicans' actual policies, their real message couldn't be more different: If you care about your kids and their future, marry rich.

Let's review the many things mothers in the US don't have. Paid time off for childbirth. Mandatory coverage of maternal care in private health insurance plans. Capped out-of-pocket costs for labor and delivery. Paid or even unpaid leave to care for their newborns. Broad support for early childhood education. Accessible and affordable child care. Paid sick days to take care of an ill kid. Labor laws that support the right to part-time or flexible work.

Republican politicians offer at best scant support for such family-friendly policies and are usually fiercely opposed. Democratic Senator Joe Manchin got a lot of flak for tanking the family provisions of Build Back Better—including a tax credit proven to keep millions of children out of poverty—but not a single Republican member of Congress supported them either.

The failure to change America's policies amounts to an endorsement of the status quo, in which being a mother is dangerous, difficult and expensive. The probability of dying during pregnancy or soon after childbirth has increased every year for the past twenty, soaring in the first two years of the pandemic. One in six mothers raise their children in poverty. One in 12 must witness their children suffer from food insecurity. Most with kids under six work, spending on average a fourth of their household income on child care—or settling for unpaid, low-quality care from friends and family that leads to a steep disadvantage in school. For all their struggles, women who have children in the US are perceived by the labor market as less competent and experience a 20% to 30% average reduction in lifetime earnings. Lifetime. They'll never recover.

Republicans have a simple solution for the challenge of being both a mom and a worker: Stay at home. Focus on the traditional female role of raising the kids. Yet for most mothers who do so, it's not a choice. They typically need and want a job, but report that they can't find or maintain one, in part because child care is

**By KATHRYN ANNE EDWARDS**  
Bloomberg Opinion

*Kathryn Anne Edwards is a labor economist and independent policy consultant.*



so scarce and costly. They're more likely than their employed counterparts to lack a higher education and to be in poverty. Staying home is evidence of the economic insecurity associated with motherhood, not a solution to it.

Granted, some mothers are unscathed by the status quo. They're fine without basic supports, insulated from policy failures. They have excellent health insurance, don't need any paid time off, can afford child care and are unbothered by lifetime earnings penalties. Who are they? Stay-at-home moms who have a rich husband. Republicans even help them maintain that wealth, by keeping their taxes low.

The one alternative to having a husband provide enough cash to stay at home would be for the government to do it—to pay moms for the work of raising kids. But Republicans outright loathe the idea. This is the party that invented work requirements for food stamps.

Marry rich. If you think about it, that's effectively the Republican platform. Take off the table everything they oppose—paid leave, paid sick days, strict health insurance regulations, free child care and labor rights for moms—and that's what remains, the only sure-fire solution to the woes of motherhood that plague the rest of us.

If that's not your plan, don't fall for Republicans' assurances that they care about hardworking parents. You'll have nothing to show for it.

**CLOCK**

From page 6

We have a precedent for the TikTok legislation in the previously discrete dating app Grindr. After Beijing Kunlun Tech acquired majority ownership of Grindr in 2016 with no clear data protections offered, the U.S. government determined there was a serious blackmail threat from ownership by a foreign adversary, especially given the app's popularity with LGBTQ+ persons. Under U.S. pressure, Grindr was sold to a California-based investor group in 2020.

Gallagher called the TikTok situation a "smokeless battlefield."

Both men noted several times that China's own citizens cannot access TikTok, another clue its raison d'être is not just revenue but overseas political manipulation.






"You can't regulate the CCP," Krishnamoorthi said, in answer to our question about whether changes could be demanded as a compromise.

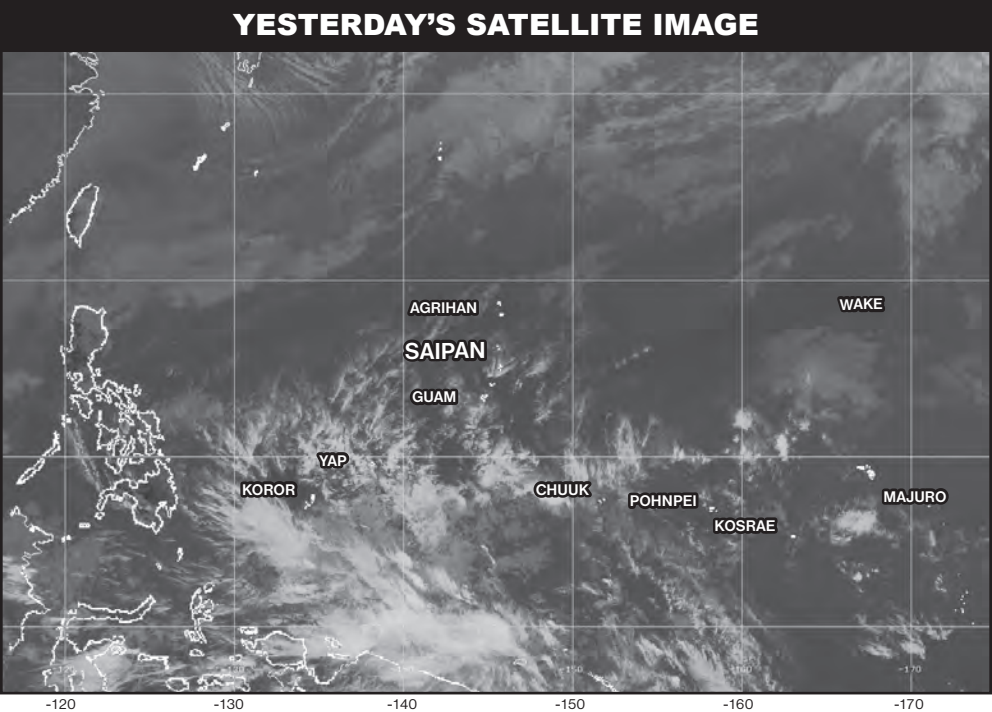
And we had no argument for that.

The rules involving foreign ownership of U.S. media outlets are contested, complex and shifting. But it's fair to say that non-U.S. entities seeking media control (or control of key U.S. infrastructure) always receive far more scrutiny from the Federal Communications Commission and other government regulators than has TikTok, even though the latter now has far more users and wields far more influence than a run-of-the-mill local or cable channel.

The two men from each side of the aisle convinced us. Bytedance has to sell, and go. And any new owners have to put transparency and data protection first.

# The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	
									
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph, becoming 15 to 20 mph Thursday night.		Breezy. Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.		Breezy. Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.		Breezy. Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.		Breezy at times. Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	
85	75°	85	75°	85	75°	85	75°	85	75°



PICTURE TIME: 7:29 AM WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Gentle to moderate northeast trades, partly cloudy skies, and isolated showers prevail across the region this morning. Tanapag buoy shows seas are around 5 to 6 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: <https://www.weather.gov/gum/>

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	85° / 74°	
Palau	Showers in the Vicinity	85° / 77°	
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	87° / 80°	
Chuuk	Cloudy	83° / 78°	
Pohnpei	Showers in the Vicinity	89° / 77°	
Kosrae	Showers in the Vicinity	89° / 82°	
Majuro	Fair	86° / 82°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:20 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:19 AM	6:28 PM
Saturday	6:18 AM	6:28 PM
Sunday	6:18 AM	6:28 PM
Monday	6:17 AM	6:28 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	3:46 AM	3:21 PM
Friday	-	4:26 AM	4:10 PM
Saturday	-	5:02 AM	4:57 PM
Sunday	-	5:35 AM	5:43 PM
Monday	-	6:08 AM	6:28 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Fair	70° / 51°	
Beijing	Fair	61° / 30°	
Hong Kong	Fair	73° / 63°	
Honolulu	Thunderstorms	80° / 71°	
London	Cloudy	50° / 39°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	62° / 52°	
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	89° / 78°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	66° / 54°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	79° / 72°	
New York	Cloudy	46° / 35°	
Osaka	Light Rain	53° / 46°	
Paris	Partly Cloudy	61° / 43°	
Busan	Partly Cloudy	59° / 39°	
Rome	Mostly Sunny	66° / 45°	
Salem	Showers	82° / 61°	
San Francisco	Fair	61° / 51°	
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	50° / 33°	
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	58° / 43°	
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	52° / 36°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
6:41 AM	High Tide	1.63	
12:15 PM	Low Tide	1.02	
5:04 PM	High Tide	1.51	
-	-	-	

## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 1, 2024

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA189	00:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
UA193	7:50PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau	PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA183	7:55PM	9:50PM	Daily	UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
				UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
7C3403/2305	4:40AM	10:20PM	Daily	UA189/174	00:40AM	8:45AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam	UA192/174	10:40PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	10:55PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
				7C2306/3406	11:15PM	3:30PM+1	Daily
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:15AM	6:10AM	Daily	7C3462	08:00AM	1:30PM	Daily Feb 7-16 only
7C3403	4:40AM	8:35AM	Daily	7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily	TW307	7:45PM	1:15AM+1	Daily
				7C3404	10:15PM	3:35AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

## STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

### FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024

SAIPAN TO ROTA					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday
GUAM TO ROTA					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday
SAIPAN TO TINIAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily
TINIAN TO SAIPAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

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# How explorers found Amelia Earhart's watery grave. Or did they?

By **THOMAS CURWEN**  
Los Angeles Times

For the record:

11:19 a.m. March 13, 2024:  
An earlier version of this article incorrectly identified in some instances, including photo captions, the research vessel Offshore Surveyor as the Offshore Explorer.

After nearly 100 days at sea, the crew had given up. Since early September, they had logged nearly 12,000 miles aboard the Offshore Surveyor, crisscrossing the equator near the 180th meridian. Now a few days past Thanksgiving, the time had come to move on.

They had worked hard under a tropical sun, days becoming weeks, a familiar routine offloading their unmanned submersible and watching as its sonar became their eyes on the ocean floor, recording all that it saw.

There'd been hiccups along the way. Crew had gotten sick. The underwater camera had broken, and after one dive, the data had come back presumably corrupted.

But the team of Deep Sea Vision hadn't let any of that get in the way. They were out to solve the greatest aviation mystery of all: the disappearance of Amelia Earhart on July 2, 1937, during her epic flight around the world.

Never mind that over the years others had tried in vain to find some evidence of her fate: a faded photograph perhaps, a long-lost letter, some scraps of her plane.

Deep Sea Vision's chief executive officer, Tony Romeo, a former real estate entrepreneur out of Charleston, S.C., had a plan.

He had studied the maps, read the history and come up with the money to try to prove that Earhart and her navigator, Fred Noonan, had miscalculated their location, run out of gas and perished after ditching their plane in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

Proof would be the watery grave of Earhart's twin-engine Lockheed Electra.

But by early December, Deep Sea Vision had nothing. Steaming away from their hopes toward their next destination, American Samoa, Romeo tried not to be too discouraged. He was having dinner with his crew, and the sun was setting on another beautiful day at sea.

Soon he would be with his family, sharing stories of this adventure and being teased for the beard he had grown while away. As for Earhart? Well, who knows? Maybe she had been abducted by aliens after all.

Then he heard someone calling. Craig Wallace, chief of operations, poked his head



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Amelia Earhart poses with her Lockheed Vega, the aircraft that helped many pilots in the late 1920s and 1930s set flying records. The Vega could fly fast and had a long range, which is why Earhart chose it to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean in 1932.

into the galley.

"Hey, you guys have to take a look at this."

Not another technical glitch, Romeo thought.

She flew east to meet the dawn and never returned. Yet in death, Amelia Earhart is still with us. Aviator, feminist, adventurer, who rose to dizzying heights of celebrity in the 1930s, she was to her American moment what Taylor Swift is to ours.

Her stage was the sky, and her songs the records she set: first as a woman, flying alone across the Atlantic and nonstop across the United States; then among all others, flying alone from Hawaii to California and from Los Angeles to Mexico City and then to New Jersey.

"She represents freedom, dreaming big, adventurousness, seeking out the unknown," said Jane Mendelsohn, who captured the heroine's complicated mystique in a novel, "I Was Amelia Earhart."

Earhart first earned her wings above the open fields of Los Angeles, wowing weekend crowds at airshows with her youth, her elegance and daring. The 1920s had found a superstar, who with her tousled hair, leather jacket, scarf and khakis, buoyed the world through the Depression.

She had long dreamed of circumnavigating the globe, a "shining adventure," as she wrote, "perhaps encouraging other women toward greater independence of thought and action." She began her journey on May 20, flying out of Oakland, with Burbank her first overnight.

Her final radio transmissions two months later en route to a critical fuel stop, Howland Island—but a speck in the middle of the

Pacific—still haunt:

We must be on you but cannot see you—but gas is running low—have been unable to reach you by radio—we are flying at 1,000 feet.

For six days, she was a banner headline in the New York Times, all shock and disbelief. She was 39 years old.

"It's the perfect riddle. It has just enough information to get you excited and not quite enough to get it solved," said Romeo, 43, whose obsession with Earhart dates to childhood.

His father, a commercial airline pilot, set the hook with tales of her adventures. When Romeo was in fifth grade, he and a friend performed in a school skit, dramatizing a page from her life. The friend played a reporter and Romeo played Earhart, just before she vanished.

We live in an age where two truths are inescapable: The past is never past, and popular culture abhors a vacuum. Since disappearing, Earhart keeps surfacing, born aloft on wild postulations from a cottage industry staffed with history buffs, aviation nerds and undersea explorers.

Some say she survived: that the Japanese rescued her and Noonan; that she was taken to Saipan to broadcast Tokyo Rose-like pronouncements during the war; or that she lived far from the spotlight of fame as a housewife in New Jersey.

Years later when a shred of aircraft aluminum and the rubber heel from a woman's shoe were found on an island 400 miles from Earhart's destination, she was imagined to have been a castaway.

Still other searchers argue that she perished after running out of gas and landing on wa-

ter. Millions of dollars have been spent combing the depths for her Electra, to no avail.

Romeo followed Wallace up the stairs to the forecastle. The Offshore Surveyor, a 110-foot research vessel, was a charter out of Papua New Guinea, and its bridge had a long settee and a table where the crew had set up a bank of computer monitors for tracking the submersible and assessing its findings.

Wallace went to his computer. He had been organizing the data and came across the file from Oct. 8—Day 32 at sea—which they hadn't initially been able to open. They presumed it was corrupted.

Other members of the expedition joined them. They had been called to the computer many times before to look at suspicious objects that ultimately didn't match the Electra's dimensions.

From the start, their submersible—a \$9-million Hugin 6000—had performed exceptionally well, running untethered for 36-hour stretches about three miles beneath them. They named it Miss Millie Pollywog, a portmanteau of Earhart's nickname and sailor's slang for someone who hasn't crossed the Equator.

Nothing escaped its Doppler, its magnetometer, echo sounder and side scan sonar as it stored hours of imagery on a 10-terabyte hard drive that gave Wallace and Romeo the experience of soaring 50 feet above the ocean floor.

The crew crowded around Wallace. He'd been able to recover the data they thought had been lost.

They had put to sea three months before at a cost of around \$15,000 a day. Six of them operated the vessel. Nine others, including a pro-

ducer and camera operator, were Romeo's crew for a documentary with the working title: "Why Not Us?"

"Why can't six random guys solve aviation's greatest riddle?" said Romeo. "We're no Robert Ballards. We're no James Camerons. We're just six guys who love the story and put together a business to solve it."

Wallace hit play.

Romeo got the idea to search for Earhart when he and his son were magnet fishing the Charleston waterways during the pandemic, recovering random pieces of metal from the shallows, a pastime they had read about in the Wall Street Journal.

After retrieving so much fishing gear, Romeo wondered if a string of powerful magnets could pull up something bigger, like a sunken plane. He bounced the idea off his brother Lloyd, a pilot who lives in Temecula. They both agreed it was crazy.

But Romeo shifted his focus to autonomous underwater vehicles and sonar, which are prohibitively expensive. But at the time, he was selling his business.

With interest rates and inflation rising—and the office market falling—he knew he had to pivot. Since retiring from the Air Force in 2008, he had been moving fast—first creating and selling a residential real estate app, then managing commercial properties—and he was ready to get out.

So he bought a fancy Norwegian submersible for \$9 million, learned how it worked, set aside another \$2 million for the expedition and said goodbye to his wife and two children before taking off for the South Pacific, armed with the idea that Noonan hadn't calculated a critical variable in longitude when they crossed the International Date Line on their way to Howland Island.

The theory had seemed plausible.

But after coming up with nothing, he wasn't so sure.

Wallace clicked the mouse, and the image on the monitor began to move.

The ocean floor on Day 32 came to life as a grainy black and yellow image scrolling down the screen like the credit roll at the end of a movie.

Wallace adjusted for brightness. He had applied filters that sorted for objects with straight lines and the same dimensions as the Lockheed Electra.

A brighter yellow shape emerged as a cross. The image was marred by interference. The submersible had caught it at a distance of about 750 feet.

Wallace froze the screen.

"Holy s—," Romeo said.

There it was. He could even make out what he thought were the twin vertical stabilizers on the tail.

He felt a chill, not quite goosebumps, just the awareness, surreal actually, that this was the plane, seen for the first time since 1937.

Wallace replayed the image, and the crew began to talk. They knew that sonar can distort and that the mind can see what it wants, and still they needed to take precautions.

They had a checklist for just this moment, and the first step was to shut down the ship's Starlink satellite connection. They wanted no one aboard to send or receive messages.

The confidentiality of their discovery—and its location—was paramount.

An estimated 3 million wrecks litter the seafloor, ranging from Nazi gold ships and Spanish galleons to ordinary cargo ships. As technology for both finding and plundering these vessels has grown more sophisticated, more companies have entered the field, increasing competition.

Never mind the tragedy of the Titan imploding last June on its way to the Titanic, killing all on board. Many firms employ unmanned autonomous vehicles for explorations just as vivid.

In 2018, a London-based company set its sights on a \$70-million reward for Malaysian Airlines Flight 370, which had gone off the radar in 2014 somewhere in the Indian Ocean, with 239 people aboard. While the airliner was not found, the company did discover other shipwrecks, whose locations could be sold to treasure hunters.

In 2022, a deep-sea mapping company and a film crew collected more than 700,000 images of the Titanic and its debris field. The expedition was framed as an attempt "to write the proper science of the Titanic" with the prospect of one day monetizing a virtual tour of the ship.

While Earhart's plane, like Ernest Shackleton's recently found Endurance, has no material worth, its value is incalculable, measured by both the prestige of finding it and by its enduring fame, which helps explain this deep obsession.

One undersea exploration company, Nauticos, has mounted four expeditions covering a total of nearly 5,000 square miles, north and west of Howland Island, and come back with nothing.

Its president and founder, Dave Jourdan, is skeptical of Deep Sea Vision's claim.

"From the information that we have, there is no way to say exactly what it is," said Jour-

See **EARHART** on Page 10



# Chun, Duenas join UOG Board of Regents

The University of Guam welcomes two new members of the UOG Board of Regents.

Regent Joanna Chun and regent Christopher "Chris" LC Duenas join the board with their respective private sector career insights.

"I am thankful and honored to serve the University of Guam and my Micro-

nesian community in this way," Chun said. "UOG plays a vital role in the continued growth and development of the people of this region, and our people's development is the through-line to Micronesia's successful present and future."

Chun is the owner and principal advisor of Value-Based



Chun



Duenas

Coaching & Consulting. Before moving home to

Guam in 2019, she spent 18 years with Northern California healthcare giant Sutter Health, advising and coaching leaders and teams in their operational excellence journeys.

Chun earned her Master's in Business Operational Excellence at Ohio State University's Fisher College of Business in 2015 and

Bachelor of Arts in English and Language Studies from San Francisco State University in 2004.

## UOG alumnus wants to give back

Duenas is a proud UOG alum, having graduated in 2000 with a degree in Finance and Economics from the School of Business and Public Administration.

He said he is passionate about giving back to the institution that gave him his professional start. Throughout his career, Duenas has leveraged his finance education to become a leader in the local financial management sector. He currently serves as the chief financial officer of Triple J Enterprises.

He has broad experience in implementing cost-saving initiatives, managing risks, and improving profitability.

"I'm eager to help guide the strategic direction of the university, and my personal experience as a beneficiary of public education in Guam will enable me to advocate for policies that provide opportunities for all students to thrive," Duenas said.

He serves on the boards of the Rotary Club of Tumon Bay and the Guam Chamber of Commerce.

The nine-member board's regents are appointed by the governor of Guam and confirmed by the Guam Legislature. They serve six-year, staggered terms.

Sandra McKeever is the board chair, Lesley-Anne Leon Guerrero, vice chair, and Mike Naholowaa is the treasurer. The other regents are Agapito "Pete" Diaz, Roland S. Certeza, Dr. Janice P. Malilay, DDS, and student regent Julie Laxamana. (PR)

# Guam hosts 1st RYLA Conference in the Pacific Basin Group

On March 1-4, 2024, Guam welcomed its very first group from Japan as a part of the island's very first Rotary Youth Leadership Awards.

The RYLA Program had its humble beginnings in Australia in 1959. It was adopted as an official Rotary International youth program in 1971, and RYLA found its way to Missouri in early 1992.

There are over 350 RYLA programs worldwide today. Through Rotarians' constant belief in the potential of youth, RYLA has since become an opportunity to help the next generation of leaders define themselves and expand their skills. Officially adopted by Rotary International in 1971, this exciting program engages Rotary clubs and districts around the world.

RYLA emphasizes leadership, citizenship, personal growth, and service and aims to demonstrate Rotary's respect and concern for youth; provide an effective training experience for selected youth and potential leaders; encourage leadership

of youth by youth; and recognize publicly young people who are rendering service to their communities.

RYLA will assist young people to realize their potential and to adapt to experiences within their life and their communities. RYLA enables participants to join other young people from across the district. Students come together to exchange ideas, plans, and opinions with other talented and energetic people like yourself in a supportive atmosphere, free from pressure and distraction.

For these students, this recognition offers the opportunity to build self-confidence, gain exposure to a variety of issues and people, meet active community leaders, and learn valuable information and career skills. RYLA gives Rotarians the opportunity to mentor promising young leaders serving their own communities and beyond. Rotarians serve as resources for participants on the path to becoming professional and community leaders. In turn, RYLA can

bring new energy to a Rotary district, inspire ideas for service, increase support of community service projects, and develop future Rotarians.

Guam, part of the Rotary Pacific Basin Group, has begun hosting its very first RYLA Program in Guam. The RYLA Program is sponsored by the partnership of District 2750 Guam Rotary Clubs and District 2770 Japan Rotary Clubs. The group is comprised of young leaders who have been awarded/sponsored the trip by their Rotary District. Rotarians from the various Guam Rotary clubs use their networks to provide resources, materials, and supplies needed to host RYLA in Guam. This specific group of Japanese Rotarians, Rotaractors, and Young Leaders focused on discussions addressing Peace and Conflict Prevention and Environment, two of Rotary International's seven Avenues of Service.

Speakers Joshua F. Tenorio, lieutenant governor of Guam,

and Kyle Mandapat, associate director of Communications and Community Engagement, University of Guam Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant, educated the group on how the territory of Guam has adopted a 10-year action plan to achieve a sustainable future for the island in line with the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Discussions detailed the plan and what exact programs are being offered through the Guam Green Growth (G3) Action Framework.

Special thanks to Wayne SN Santos, international director and past assistant district governor (Rotary Club of Northern Guam), Manami Rosario, president (Rotary Club of Guam Sunrise), and Candise Aragon (Rotary Club of Pago Bay Guam) for their service with the conference's coordination.

For more information, contact Santos via email at wsn-santos@yahoo.com or Aragon via email at candise.aragon@gmail.com or via call at (671) 747-2494. (PR)

## EARHART

From page 9

dan. "It could be an aircraft. It could be a pile of rocks that looks like an aircraft. We just can't tell. If it were the Electra, there are certain features we would expect to see: big engines, straight wings (not swept-back wings), closer dimensions."

Those discrepancies can be explained, he said, "but the more discrepancies you have, the more explanation is required."

John Gregg, whose Signal Hill-based company has conducted underwater surveys for development projects off Australia and Africa, calls Deep Sea Vision's work "credible." He also argues that there's more at stake than just finding the Electra.

"These guys want the big splash to move their brand along," said Gregg, "and to even raise the possibility that they have found it, they have accomplished their goal. They have gotten on everyone's playlist."

Hypnotized by the image,

Romeo felt a pang of regret.

They had had it all along, 68 days earlier, if only they had taken the time to retrieve the file.

But he realized that the delay played to their advantage. The coordinates of Earhart's plane were miles behind them. No one would be able to retrace their course.

He relaxed. The news would get out eventually, so the team decided to scrub the image of sensitive data and release it.

Wallace grabbed a bottle of whiskey, vintage 1937, the year Earhart disappeared. A toast seemed in order. But they held back. The Pacific was a graveyard of lost planes, and they wanted undeniable confirmation.

"Of course, it could be another aircraft. Until this is confirmed, skepticism is fair and needed," said Romeo, who hopes to provide the ending to this chapter of history.

"It is a story that needs closure," he said.

But will the mystery of Amelia Earhart ever be closed?

"Many people have want-

ed to be the first to know and solve the mystery," said biographer Susan Butler, whose "East to the Dawn: The Life of Amelia Earhart" covers the breadth of her accomplishments. "But I never understood why, when the most fascinating thing was the most wonderful life she led."

Mendelsohn, the novelist, has come to understand Earhart's life and death as a Rorschach upon which the culture projects its unspoken aspirations, its unbridled desires no matter the risk, the danger or prospect of failure.

"I don't know if finding out what actually happened will change any of that," said Mendelsohn. "Even if we find the plane, I don't think we will ever unravel the mystery of Amelia Earhart."

Romeo is busy working out the logistics for returning to that remote corner of the Pacific in 2025.

He is confident that the Electra is so well-preserved in the icy depths that a photograph will show its radio registration—NR16020—

lettered on its wings.

Then comes the task of its retrieval.

For Romeo to make a claim in maritime court, he would have to provide some physical evidence. Not wanting to damage the plane, he is hoping photographs will do.

Then comes the question of sensitivity. While Earhart had no children, there are surviving relatives on her sister's side of the family.

"We plan on working with them," Romeo said.

Lastly, there are logistics. To bring the plane to the surface, it needs to be structurally sound, and Romeo suspects it is, since Earhart was a skilled pilot who likely landed the plane on the water rather than crashing.

Then it's a matter of getting a net under it, a task that "requires an engineering skill set that we don't have."

Still, Romeo is resolved.

"She belongs in the Smithsonian," he said. "She needs to come home."

*This story originally appeared in Los Angeles Times.*

# UOG welcomes dean of School of Engineering

The University of Guam welcomes its new dean of the School of Engineering, Dr. Hiroshan Hettiarachchi, P.E.

Hettiarachchi comes to Guam from Michigan where he practiced as an independent sustainability consultant focusing on circular economy, waste management, and geotechnical engineering issues.

He holds a Ph.D. in Civil Engineering from the New Jersey Institute of Technology, a Master of Science in Soil Engineering from the Asian Institute of Technology in Thailand, and a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Moratuwa in Sri Lanka. He offers over 25 years of diverse experience in academic/industry/research settings and new program development.

He brings diverse and international workplace experiences to UOG. Before his consulting work in Michigan, he was at the United Nations as a professor and the head of Waste (Resources) Management Unit at the United Nations University Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources in Dresden, Germany. At UNU-FLORES he established a sustainability-related doctoral program in integrated management of water, soil, and waste.

"We look forward to Dr. Hettiarachchi's leadership as our School of Engineering serves a growing number of engineering majors and as it continues to develop pathways to employment for our graduates with industry partners," said UOG president Anita Borja Enriquez. From its first

set of 12 civil engineering graduates in December 2021, UOG now has 182 declared civil engineering majors.

Hettiarachchi said he brings diverse experiences that come in part from having worked with a wide spectrum of experts—from lifetime indigenous farmers to executive or ministerial-level officials.

In the past decade, the dean also has incorporated sustainability into his engineering experience. UOG's focus on island sustainability efforts was part of what convinced him to apply for the dean position at UOG.

He aims to build the School of Engineering including adding disciplines such as electrical engineering. UOG has an existing partnership with the University of Hawaii at Manoa that allows UOG engineering students to move to UH in their junior year if they choose to pursue a Mechanical Engineering major. The partnership also includes the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, which will hire graduates who qualify.

Hettiarachchi brings an understanding of the need to further develop resources toward becoming a self-sustainable Guam, as he grew up on an island in Sri Lanka where island sustainability is also highly valued.

"I am excited about this opportunity to serve as the dean of Engineering. The overwhelming support we are receiving from the industry and other engineering-related entities on the island and the region to expand our engineering education missions at UOG, is quite unique." (PR)



Hettiarachchi



# World

AS ISRAEL RAIDS IT FOR A 2ND DAY

## Heavy fighting rages around Gaza's biggest hospital

**RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP)**—Explosions and shootings shook the Gaza Strip's biggest hospital and surrounding neighborhoods as Israeli forces stormed through the facility for a second day Tuesday. The military said it had killed 50 Hamas militants in the hospital, but it could not be independently confirmed that the dead were combatants.

The raid was a new blow to the Shifa medical complex, which had only partially resumed operations after a destructive Israeli raid in November. Thousands of Palestinian patients, medical staff and displaced people were trapped inside the sprawling complex Tuesday as heavy fighting between troops and Hamas fighters raged in nearby districts.

"It's very hard right now. There's heavy bombardment in the area of Shifa, and buildings are being hit. The sound of tank and artillery fire is continuous," Emy Shaheen, who lives near the hospital, said in a voice message with repeated booms of shelling audible in the background. She said a large fire had been raging for hours near the hospital.

The Israeli military said it raided Shifa early Monday because Hamas fighters had grouped in the hospital and were directing attacks from inside.

The claim could not be confirmed, and the Hamas media office said all those killed in the assault were civilians. But the surge in fighting in Gaza City underscored Hamas' continued presence in northern Gaza months after Israeli ground troops claimed they largely had control over the area.

Israel launched its offensive in Gaza vowing to destroy Hamas after the group's Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel. More than 31,800 Palestinians have been killed in the bombardment and offensive since. Much of northern Gaza has been leveled, and an international authority on hunger crises warned on Monday that 70% of the people there were experiencing catastrophic hunger and that famine was imminent.

The mayhem in the north came as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu repeated his determination to invade Gaza's southernmost town, Rafah—one of the last major towns not targeted by a ground assault.

A day earlier, in their first phone call in a month, U.S. President Joe Biden urged Netanyahu not to carry out a Rafah operation, urging "an alternative approach" to more precisely target Hamas fighters there.

The United States, Israel's closest ally, has expressed con-

cern over attacking Rafah because some 1.4 million people from across Gaza have crowded into the area. U.N. officials have warned of a massive death toll and the potential collapse of the humanitarian aid effort if troops moved into Rafah.

Netanyahu agreed to send a team of Israeli officials to Washington to discuss Rafah with Biden administration officials.

But on Tuesday, he told a parliamentary committee that while he would listen to U.S. proposals "out of respect" to Biden, "we are determined to complete the elimination of these (Hamas) battalions in Rafah,

and there is no way to do this without a ground incursion."

Airstrikes in Rafah overnight destroyed an apartment and several houses, killing at least 15 people, including six women and children, hospital officials said.

### NEW SHIFA SIEGE

The army last raided Shifa Hospital in November after claiming that Hamas maintained an elaborate command center within and beneath the facility. The military revealed a tunnel leading to some underground rooms, as well as weapons it said were found in-

side the hospital. However, the evidence fell short of the earlier claims, and critics accused the army of recklessly endangering the lives of civilians.

The hospital, which is the heart of Gaza's health system, was severely damaged in the assault and has only been able to resume limited operations since. Gaza officials say some 30,000 displaced people were taking refuge in the compound when the new Israeli assault began.

The raid came before dawn Monday when tanks surrounded the facility and troops stormed into multiple buildings.

The military on Tuesday said

two of its soldiers had been killed in the operation. It said Tuesday that 300 suspects were detained, including dozens it accused of being fighters from Hamas and the smaller Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad. Some patients were evacuated to nearby Ahli Hospital, said Mahmoud Bassal, civil defense spokesperson.

Abdel-Hady Sayed, who has been sheltering in the Shifa hospital, said troops had rounded up dozens in the hospital's yard, blindfolding, handcuffing, and ordering them to strip their clothes before some were taken away.

## N. Korea claims progress in developing hypersonic missile designed to strike distant targets in the US

**SEOUL, South Korea (AP)**—North Korea successfully tested a solid-fuel engine for its new-type intermediate-range hypersonic missile, state media reported Wednesday, claiming a progress in efforts to develop a more powerful, agile missile designed to strike faraway

U.S. targets in the region.

A hypersonic missile is among an array of high-tech weapons systems that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un publicly vowed to introduce in 2021 to cope with what he called deepening U.S. hostility. Outside experts say Kim wants a modernized weapons

arsenal to wrest U.S. concessions like sanctions relief when diplomacy resumes.

On Tuesday, Kim guided the ground jet test of the multi-stage solid-fuel engine for the hypersonic missile at the North's northwestern rocket launch facility, the official Korean Central News

Agency reported.

It cited Kim as saying the strategic value of the new missile with an intermediate-range is as important as intercontinental ballistic missiles targeting the U.S. mainland and that "enemies know better about it." It said that a timetable for completing the development of the new weapons system was "set through the great success in the important test."

## Russia says it will evacuate 9,000 children from border region targeted by Ukraine

Russia plans to evacuate about 9,000 children from a border region because it is being shelled continuously by Ukraine, an official said Tuesday, reflecting Kyiv's increasing focus on striking targets behind a front line that has barely shifted in recent months.

The children will be moved from the Belgorod region farther east, away from the Ukraine border, said the region's governor, Vyacheslav Gladkov.

The announcement came a day after Russian President Vladimir Putin said the Kremlin wants to create a buffer zone to help protect border regions from long-range Ukrainian strikes and cross-border raids more than two years into the war.

Ukraine has increasingly used its long-range firepower to hit oil refineries and depots deep inside Russia and has sought to unsettle the Russian border regions, putting political pressure on Putin.

In addition, Ukraine-based Russian opponents of Pu-

tin and the Kremlin have launched cross-border raids. Putin discussed the cross-border incursions during a meeting Tuesday with top officials of the Federal Security Service, the FSB.

Civilian areas of Belgorod have been battered in the fighting. According to Gladkov, 16 people died and 98 were injured over the last week alone. On Saturday, he ordered the closure of shopping malls through Monday and schools through Tuesday because of the security situation.

The planned evacuation of children is one of the biggest publicly announced in the Belgorod region since the war began in February 2022. About 1,000 people, including children and their families, were evacuated to other Russian regions last June, and there have been other sporadic reports of evacuations over the past year.

It was unclear whether adults would be accompanying the children under the latest evacuation order. If so, the total number of evacuees could be much higher. (AP)



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# Life & Style

## Ex-GF of Jonathan Majors accuses him of escalating abuse, defamation

By DAVE COLLINS  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jonathan Majors' former girlfriend sued him Tuesday on civil allegations including assault, battery, defamation and infliction of emotional distress, three months after the actor was convicted in a criminal trial of assaulting her in New York City.

Grace Jabbari, a 31-year-old British dancer, filed the action in federal court in Manhattan, claiming Majors subjected her to escalating incidents of physical and verbal abuse from 2021 to 2023.

"Grace Jabbari's resolve has never wavered," her lawyer, Brittany Henderson, said in an email to The Associated Press. "She has shown tremendous bravery in her quest for accountability. This action will shed light on the truth, bringing her the finality and justice that she deserves."

Majors, 34, maintained his innocence during the criminal case. A Manhattan jury con-

victed him in December of one misdemeanor assault charge and one harassment violation stemming from a confrontation with Jabbari the previous March. He also was acquitted of a different assault charge and of aggravated harassment. Sentencing is set for April 8.

Jabbari said Majors attacked her in a car and left her in "excruciating" pain; his lawyers alleged Jabbari was the aggressor.

Priya Chaudhry, Majors' lawyer in the criminal case, said in an emailed statement that the lawsuit "is no surprise. Mr. Majors is preparing counterclaims against Ms. Jabbari." She did not elaborate.

Other lawyers and a representative for Majors did not immediately return messages Tuesday.

The "Creed III" star had hoped the criminal trial would vindicate him and restore his

status as an emerging Hollywood star. But only hours after the verdict, Marvel Studios and the Walt Disney Co. dropped him.

The new lawsuit says Jabbari and Majors first met in August 2021, immediately started dating and she fell in love with him.

The lawsuit alleges a series of incidents where Majors showed controlling and abusive behavior, including demands in June 2022 that she "never go anywhere again where she was not available for him to reach her at all times."

The next month, the suit claims, Majors became angry and threw her into a shower wall in Los Angeles, causing her to hit her head against the wall.

In September 2022, after they had moved into a London flat together while he was filming the Marvel series "Loki," Majors became angry at Jabbari for inviting her friend over to their

new home, the suit says.

"Majors picked Grace up in the air and threw her against the hood of her car," the suit says. "Grace began shouting for help. Majors then forcefully grabbed Grace, placing her in a headlock and put his hand over her mouth to prevent someone from hearing her cries for help."

Majors then brought Jabbari into their flat and put his hands around her neck, saying he wanted to kill her, the suit alleges. He then started hitting her head against the marble floor "while strangling her until she felt she could no longer breathe," the suit says.

Jabbari said she did not seek medical attention after that incident, at Majors' urging and his concerns about his career, the suit says. Majors also threatened to kill himself, the legal filing alleges.

Despite the alleged abuse, Jabbari stayed with Majors, the suit says. "Like many victims of domestic violence,

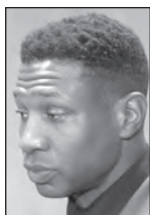
Grace believed Defendant Majors would change and stop abusing her," it says.

In December 2022, they moved into an apartment in New York. The abuse continued there, leading to the assault case against Majors, the suit says.

In that case, Jabbari accused Majors of hitting her in the head with his open hand, twisting

her arm behind her back and squeezing her middle finger until it fractured.

Majors' lawyers alleged she flew into a jealous rage after reading a text message—from another woman—on his phone. They said Jabbari had spread a "fantasy" to take down the actor, who was only trying to regain his phone and get away safely.



Majors

## Caitlyn Jenner backs NY county's ban on transgender female athletes

MINEOLA, N.Y. (AP)—Olympic gold medalist Caitlyn Jenner on Monday said she supported a local New York official's order banning female sports teams with transgender athletes from using county-owned facilities.

The ban applies to over 100 athletic facilities in New York City's Long Island suburbs.

Speaking alongside Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman at his office in Mineola, Jenner said allowing transgender athletes like herself to compete against other women will "ruin women's sports" for years to come.

"Let's stop it now while we can," said the reality television star, who came out as a transgender woman in 2015.

The LGBT Network, a Long Island-based advocacy group, called Jenner's comments a "baffling contradiction" to her own identity as a transgender woman that is "not only hypocritical but also harmful" to the LGBTQ community.

"It is disheartening to witness someone who has experienced the challenges of being marginalized actively contribute to the oppression of others within the same community," David Kilmnick, the group's president, said in a statement. "Such actions only serve to amplify the voices of intolerance and detract from the collective efforts towards a more inclusive society."

Blakeman, a Republican elected in 2021, issued an executive order in February requiring any teams, leagues or organizations seeking a permit from the county's parks and recreation department to "expressly designate" whether they are for male, female or coed athletes.

Any teams designated as "female" would be denied permits if they allow transgender athletes to participate.

The ban doesn't apply to men's teams with transgender athletes. It covers all Nassau County-owned facilities, including ballfields, basketball and tennis courts, swimming pools and ice rinks.



Jenner

### SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

#### Belgian fashion designer Dries Van Noten is stepping down as creative director at the end of June

BRUSSELS (AP)—Belgian designer Dries Van Noten, who for almost four decades dazzled the fashion world with his luscious use of colors and fabrics, said Tuesday that he will step down as creative director of his namesake brand at the end of June. Van Noten, 65, a master of blending the old with the new, said in a statement that the 2025 men's spring-summer collection will be the last in his current role. He added that the women's

collection will be designed by his studio. Van Noten's successor will be announced at a later stage, he said. "I have been preparing for this moment for a while, and I feel it's time to leave room for a new generation of talents to bring their vision to the brand," Van Noten said. Although he will relinquish his role as creative director, Van Noten will still be involved in the fashion house.

#### Algeria scolds television stations for Ramadan advertising blitz and immoral programming

ALGIERS, Algeria (AP)—

Officials in Algeria are chiding television stations over the content choices they've made since the start of Ramadan last week, injecting religion into broader discussions about how the country regulates content and advertising in media. Their criticisms come amid broader struggles facing journalists and broadcasters, where television stations and newspapers have historically relied heavily on advertising from the government and large state-aligned enterprises in the oil-rich nation. After meeting with station directors on Sunday, Algerian Commu-

nications Minister Mohamed Lagab accused networks of not respecting ethical and professional lines, calling their programmatic choices "out of keeping with the social traditions of our society and especially the sacredness of the month of Ramadan." Lagab, a former journalism school professor, preemptively rebuffed accusations of censorship, arguing that his ministry's push didn't run counter to Algeria's constitutional press freedom guarantees. "Television stations have the right to criticize, but not by attacking our society's moral values," he said.

## Once-supportive wife becomes abusive drinker

**DEAR ABBY:** I have been married for 28 years. Last year I was diagnosed with cancer. It was discovered because of a seizure I had at work. They put me in an ambulance, took me to the hospital and did a CT scan, which revealed my stage-4 cancer. Prior to this, my wife didn't work, while I had a well-paying job. This instantly reversed for obvious reasons.

My wife was extremely attentive. She started taking me to all my appointments and spent a lot of time with me in the hospital on her days off. This was about a six-month ordeal, and long story short, when I saw my doctors last week, they announced that after 35 radiation treatments and seven chemo treatments, they can no longer find any visual evidence of the cancer. I was so thrilled I cried.

Since then, my wife has been drinking heavily and getting angry with me just about every night. I don't know what's going on with her or what to do. She's the best woman I've ever met, and I don't want to lose her, but she's starting to become violent. Could you give me some advice?

RECOVERING BUT CONFUSED

**DEAR RECOVERING:** Your wife may be reacting to the trauma she suffered when you became ill, which meant she had to become the primary caregiver. This, however, does not excuse her excessive drinking and violent episodes. Of one thing I am certain: You MUST

**NOT allow the status quo to continue, regardless of how much you love her. She should be evaluated by her doctor to see if something is medically wrong with her. And the two of you need to get into counseling right away, and because she can't handle her drinking, she may need to start rehab or join a self-help group.**

■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** My 22-year-old stepdaughter has been receiving very large Venmo payments into her bank account. I know this because my husband, her father, is also on the account and I have access to it. We have asked her several times where the money is coming from. The first time, she lied and said it was from dog walking. (She has a history of lying.)

She has recently started claiming that her old "boyfriend" from four years ago—whom she broke up with because she found tons of photos of half-naked women on his phone—was sending her money. Abby, this isn't \$20 or even \$100. It's thousands of dollars EVERY month. Her ex was a delivery driver. No way can he make that much after-tax money. Where do you think she's getting the money? I say sex, but my husband refuses to believe it. What should I do?

SUSPICIOUS IN TEXAS

**DEAR SUSPICIOUS:** I, too, suspect that your stepdaughter may be involved in something sex-related. She

## DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



could be an escort, have found herself a sugar daddy, or be participating in a sex webcam show. She could also be involved in selling illegal drugs.

**Because your husband refuses to believe his daughter would do anything illicit, for the sake of your marriage, take a step back. Wait to see what transpires. His daughter is an adult and is responsible for making her own decisions. Because she has trouble telling the truth, there is nothing you can do to help.**

■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable — and most frequently requested — poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby — Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)



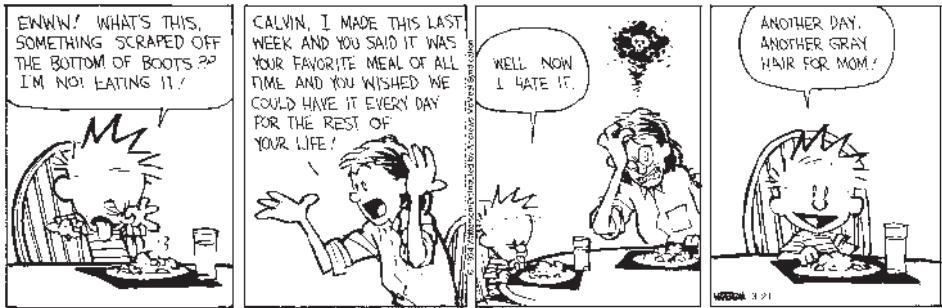
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

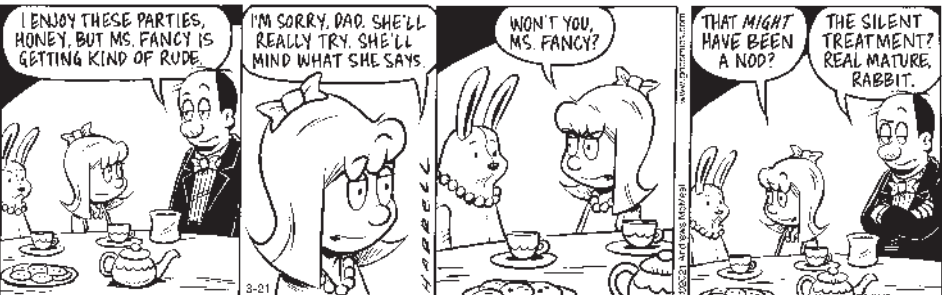


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

1 Voting group

5 "The Raven" writer

8 "Huh?"

12 IRA type

13 Raggedy doll

14 Quasi-modo's creator

15 Play opener

16 Filming site

17 Town near Padua

18 Bone-head

20 "Yeah, right!"

22 Pet protector

26 Bamboo unit

29 Puzzle

30 British verb ending

31 Deserve

32 Writer's block?

33 Use scissors

34 Do sum work?

**35** French pronoun

**36** Painter of ballerinas

**37** Sea urchin

**40** Desertlike

**41** Arrival

**45** Copenhagen native

**47** "Viva — Vegas"

**49** Notion

**50** Sea predator

**51** Summer hrs. in D.C.

**52** Play group

**53** Obey

**54** Snake's sound

**55** CPR pros

**DOWN**

1 Pitt of "Troy"

2 Bonkers

3 "Beetle Bailey" dog

4 Sheer fabric

5 No longer in

6 Low digit

7 Tempted

8 Roulette spinner

9 Working hard

10 CIA employee

11 Sock part

19 Last (Abbr.)

21 Jury enclosure

23 Use

24 Nepal's continent

25 Workout count

26 Global septet

27 "Mary — Little Lamb"

28 Artillery

32 Curly haired dogs

33 Military stint

35 Roman 1501

36 June honoree

38 Fear greatly

39 Endures

42 Wax-coated cheese

43 Hatchling's home

44 Makes lace

45 "What was I thinking?"

46 Exist

48 Bill-boards

**Solution time: 24 mins.**

**Last Friday's Answer**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Jace Norman, 24; Matthew Broderick, 62; Rosie O'Donnell, 62; Gary Oldman, 66.

**Happy Birthday:** Put your power in place and make things happen. Confidence and courage will convince others to help you complete your missions this year. Speak up and share your thoughts and plans, and you'll gain the support and suggestions you need to redirect your energy into something that offers concrete results. Your numbers are 3, 9, 18, 23, 30, 41, 49.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Refuse to let what others do stop you in your tracks. Assess situations and proceed in the direction closest to your goal. Strengthen your position by mobilizing your efforts into undeniable results. Follow your appeal with actions, and others will take notice. ★★★★★

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Check out who and what is available. Use your charm to gain ground. Being stubborn will lead to rejection, which sets you back and disrupts a meaningful connection. Take on only what you can handle. Falling short will hinder your chance to advance. ★★

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Cross your fingers, hope for the best and verify information before you make references that can affect your reputation. Stick close to home and make room for the plans you want to pursue. Avoid overspending by doing for yourself. ★★★★★

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Take pride in your work, and you'll get the rewards you deserve. Lean into whatever you pursue with determination and the resolve to finish what you start, and the recognition and

support you want will be yours. ★★★★★

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Don't mix emotions and money. A change of plans will conflict with responsibilities. Your experience will help you devise a means to overcome any setback. Put your energy where it counts, and you'll discover unusual opportunities. Don't wait for things to come to you. ★★★★★

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Keep everything the same. Focus on what's already moving and motivating you, and direct your energy into expanding and exploring what you've already begun. An opportunity to discover what you can do will come from someone you admire and respect. Live and learn. ★★★★★

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Share your feelings and intentions with someone you want to spend more time with, and you'll create a synergy enabling you to proceed and monitor contracts and expenses carefully. Maintaining balance will determine the outcome of a partnership. ★★★★★

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Consider what you can accomplish physically, then get started. Make changes that will eliminate controversy. Clear up vendettas before you proceed. Deal with your emotions before you act in a way that jeopardizes something you long for. Keep the peace and offer genuine solutions. ★★

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Use your energy before it backfires and takes you on a rampage that disrupts your life. Take better care of your physical and emotional self and refuse to let anyone goad you into a fight. Use intelligence, not brawn, when a challenge or competitive offer develops. ★★★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Let the past dictate how you handle upcoming changes that can influence or affect your lifestyle or home environment. Change can be favorable but will require a fixed budget and discipline if you want to avoid debt. Your goal is financial independence and positioning. ★★★★★

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Let observation and detail be your forte. If you are too open, someone will swoop in and take over. Choose your path for the right reason, not to appeal to someone else's needs. Keep your emotions out of your playbook when trying to get ahead. ★★★★★

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** Getting along with whoever you deal with today will be difficult if you let your emotions filter into your conversations. A solid, direct approach will help you maintain leverage and encourage a positive response. Be true to yourself. ★★★★★

**Birthday Baby:** You are disciplined, creative and passionate. You are charitable and assertive.

★: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ★★: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ★★★: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ★★★★: Aim high; start new projects. ★★★★★: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

2		9									
	3				8	1					
	8			7							
						4					
6		3	4	9			2				
				8		6		7			
			7				1				
8	2	6		3							
	7		9	8			4	3			

Difficulty: ★★★

3/21

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

4	3	6	9	1	5	7	8	2
5	9	8	3	7	2	6	1	4
7	2	1	8	6	4	9	5	3
3	8	4	1	5	6	2	7	9
6	1	2	7	3	9	5	4	8
9	7	5	2	4	8	3	6	1
2	4	7	6	8	3	1	9	5
1	5	9	4	2	7	8	3	6
8	6	3	5	9	1	4	2	7

Difficulty: ★★★

3/21

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

**HOW TO PLAY:** All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

A MENAGERIE OF ...

Solution: 9 letters

A P S L I S S O F L O W E R S  
S U O S T E N G A M P A R K S  
A E T S N O I T C E L L O C T  
L F U O T C E M N P O S A U N  
B I T Q G C A S B L T R G S E  
U S M U I R A U Q A S L A E M  
M H S D B T A R M N D B D R  
S H E L L S N P D T A G D H R  
S T E P A N S A H S A E E S T  
N S S C I M O C E S M T N S S  
O Y D N A C I B E U T A T S N  
B S T O A O A N F S Y O T O I  
B U G S L L O R A R E R O I O  
I E E U L L E Z R E T T U L C  
R S S S M P S R I N E V U O S

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3/21

Albums, Animals, Antiques, Aquarium, Autographs, Badges, Baseballs, Bugs, Candy, Cars, Cases, Clutter, Collection, Comics, Dice, Dolls, Fish, Flowers, Fossils, Garden, Instruments, Magnets, Marbles, Meals, Mugs, Park, Pens, Perfume, Pets, Plants, Postcards, Rare, Ribbons, Shells, Shoes, Souvenirs, Stamps, Statue, Stones, Tattoo, Tools, Toys, Zoo

**Last Friday's Answer: Computers**

The NEW Treasury 57 can be purchased online at [www.WonderWordBooks.com](http://www.WonderWordBooks.com), or call 1-800-642-6486. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367.)



# Magic clinch a play-in spot in 112-92 win over Hornets



**ORLANDO, Fla.** (AP)—Cole Anthony scored 17 of his 21 points in the second quarter and the Orlando Magic routed Charlotte to clinch at least a play-in berth in the Eastern Conference playoffs.

Jalen Suggs survived a couple of physical confrontations in the second period to finish the game with 16 points, six assists and three steals. Paolo Banchero added 13 points and five assists for the Magic, who led 67-32 at halftime.

Orlando (41-28) is fifth in the East and can't be caught by 11th-place Brooklyn with 13 games left in the season. The Magic have won 12 of 15 and secured only their second non-losing season since 2011-12. They went 42-40 in 2018-19.

Rookies Brandon Miller scored 21 points and Vasilije Micic added 20 for the Hornets, who have lost 10 of 12.

## ROCKETS 137, WIZARDS 114

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—Jalen Green tied a career high with 42 points, and Houston closed the third quarter on a 25-6 run en route to their sixth straight victory, 137-114 over Washington.

Houston is now just 2 1/2 games behind Golden State for the final play-in spot in the Western Conference. Amen Thompson scored 25 points for the Rockets, and Fred VanVleet had seven points and 11 assists.

Corey Kispert scored 16 points for Washington, which was without Kyle Kuzma (left shoulder), Deni Avdija (right



Orlando Magic guard Gary Harris (14) is defended by Charlotte Hornets guard Tre Mann (23) during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, March 19, 2024, in Orlando, Fla.

knee), Tyus Jones (back) and Bilal Coulibaly (right wrist).

Even with all those absences, the Wizards shot well enough from 3-point range to make a game of it for 2 1/2 quarters. Then Green broke a 76-all tie with two straight 3s and a three-point play, making it 85-76. After a couple Washington free throws, the Rockets scored seven more points in a row and

it was never close after that.

Green scored 15 points in the third quarter and finished the game with 10 rebounds. His previous season high in points was 37—last Thursday against Washington.

## PELICANS 104, NETS 91

**BROOKLYN, N.Y.** (AP)—Zion Williamson scored 28

points and wowed the Barclays Center crowd with a high-flying alley-oop dunk, and New Orleans beat Brooklyn.

CJ McCollum added 16 points, Larry Nance Jr. had 13 points and 10 rebounds, and Brandon Ingram and Herb Jones each finished with 11 points for the Pelicans, who opened a four-game road swing with their third straight

win and seventh in eight games. New Orleans is fifth in the Western Conference.

Cam Thomas had 25 points and Mikal Bridges added 15 for the Nets, who have lost four straight.

The Pelicans shot 50.6% from the field while limiting Brooklyn to 36.9% shooting.

New Orleans led by 24 points in the second quarter

and by 19 at halftime. Brooklyn opened the third quarter with an 11-4 run, capped by Thomas' 3-pointer that made it 68-57 with 8:56 remaining in the period.

## MAVERICKS 113, SPURS 107

**SAN ANTONIO** (AP)—Kyrie Irving scored 28 points, Luka Doncic had 18 points and 16 assists, and Dallas held off San Antonio.

Doncic shot 6 of 27 from the field but still finished with his eighth triple-double in 10 games, helping Dallas win a game critical to its playoff hopes. It was just the sixth time in his career he's shot worse than 25% while playing regular minutes.

Dallas (40-29) trails Sacramento (39-28) by percentage points for sixth place in the Western Conference and the final automatic playoff berth.

Tre Jones scored 22 points and Devin Vassell added 19 points for San Antonio. Victor Wembanyama had 12 points and 11 rebounds for his 37th double-double.

The Mavs swept their four-game season series against the Spurs after winning the first three by an average of 18.3 points. Irving and Doncic were critical in the final minutes of the closely contested finale.

After trailing by 13 points in the first half, San Antonio had 11-0 runs to open the third quarter as well as early in the fourth. The latter run gave the Spurs a 95-93 lead with 6:57 remaining.

There were nine lead changes in the second half, but Dallas took a 102-101 lead with 3:46 remaining and didn't trail again.

## NUGGETS 115, TIMBERWOLVES 112

**MINNEAPOLIS** (AP)—Nikola Jokic had 35 points and 16 rebounds and Michael Porter Jr. scored 13 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter as Denver fended off undermanned and undersized Minnesota.

Jamal Murray added 18 points and 11 assists and Aaron Gordon had 14 points and 11 rebounds for the Nuggets, who blew an 18-point lead in less than 12 minutes before finishing a four-game road trip strong.

The Nuggets (48-21) moved within percentage points of idle Oklahoma City (47-20) for the Western Conference lead. The Timberwolves (47-22) dropped one game back into third place.

Anthony Edwards had 30 points—his fourth straight 30-point game—and eight rebounds and eight assists. The clean look from the wing he created with a crossover dribble for the tie at the buzzer hit the rim and fell short.

# Garoppolo discloses reason for PED suspension, expresses excitement at fresh start with Rams



**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—After seven seasons of success and setbacks as a starting NFL

quarterback, Jimmy Garoppolo decided it was time to take a step back to recharge his career.

He couldn't think of a better place to do it than with Sean McVay and the Los Angeles Rams.

"I'm excited to start this new journey," Garoppolo said Tuesday after the Rams officially announced their signing of the longtime San Francisco starter. "I don't know exactly what's in store for me—but maybe reset, reinvent, whatever you want to call it. I'm just excited to get back on the football field and start slinging it around with some new guys."

The 32-year-old Garoppolo also gave some insight into the reason he must sit out the first two games of the new season under suspension for violating the league's policy on performance-enhancing drugs. The quarterback said

the suspension was the result of a mistake in his filing for a therapeutic use exemption for an unspecified substance.

"I just messed up the TUE, really," Garoppolo said. "I hate to joke about it, but I messed up the TUE when I first got to Las Vegas. Bad timing, I guess."

Garoppolo agreed to join the Rams last week, two days after Las Vegas released him. His only year with the Raiders was tumultuous and ultimately disappointing, considering Garoppolo started it with a three-year, \$72.75 million contract and ended it on the bench behind a rookie.

It was a large step down from his years of success with the 49ers. When he hit free agency, Garoppolo decided he wanted to follow in the footsteps of Tampa Bay's Baker Mayfield, who revitalized his career in late 2022 with a successful five-game stint under McVay.

"What Baker did, that was tremendous, incredible," Garoppolo said. "Sean is a phenomenal offensive mind. A lot of

the guys around here are. I think that played a big part. Reinventing, whatever you want to call it, a quarterback, having good people around you. It's not all going to be done by you. You've got to have people around you to put you in a good position, call the right plays, all those little things. It's an opportunity, and I got excited. It just seemed right."

After beginning his career behind Tom Brady in New England, Garoppolo has been a starting quarterback for most of the past seven seasons, not including several lengthy injury absences.

In LA, he will be the backup to Matthew Stafford, who will enter his 16th NFL season and his fourth as Los Angeles' starter. The 36-year-old Stafford showed no signs of slowing down during a strong 2023-24 season, leading the Rams to 10 wins and a playoff berth while earning a Pro Bowl selection.

Garoppolo said Stafford is a "normal, down-to-earth guy. Super Bowl champion, I think that speaks for itself,

and his arm talent I don't think gets enough credit, but I think people are starting to notice. I'm excited to work with him, learn from him."

The signing of Garoppolo and his 63 career NFL starts signals a shift in attitude by the Rams about their backup quarterback job, which often has been filled with untested players during McVay's first seven seasons.

That money-saving attitude came back to bite the Rams in each of the past two seasons when Stafford went down with injuries, leading to ineffective play from the seldom-used reserves. Los Angeles eventually had to sign Mayfield in 2022 and Carson Wentz last season when McVay's initial backup plan proved unsuccessful.

Although it clearly wasn't the motivating factor, the Rams are undoubtedly aware of Garoppolo's 8-0 record as a starter against Los Angeles in the regular season—part of Kyle Shanahan's steady dominance over McVay, his close friend and former colleague in Washington.

But Garoppolo's Niners also lost a close NFC championship game to the Rams in January 2022, and McVay's team went on to win the title.

Shanahan and McVay employ broadly similar offenses, so Garoppolo is already ahead on learning terminology. He also knows several assistant coaches, including offensive coordinator Mike LaFleur, who was his passing game coordinator for four seasons with the 49ers.

While he will miss the first two games, Garoppolo is looking forward to the offseason and the preseason as a chance to start his next chapter before the suspension kicks in.

"Just take it in stride, I guess," Garoppolo said. "It's a weird one, but it is what it is, I guess. Attack OTAs, attack training camp and let those first two games pass by. Hopefully we'll get some dubs, start off 2-0 and keep things moving. ... You've just got to keep moving on and stay positive."



# Hafa Adai 5K Color Fun Run on April 6



Pacific Islands Club Saipan will be hosting the Hafa Adai 5K Color Fun Run on April 6.

This no-timed-everyone-wins 5-kilometer fun run known as the Hafa Adai 5K will generate charitable funds to be donated to the Saipan Humane Society.

This year's beneficiary is a non-profit organization founded in response to animal overpopulation and the need for veterinary services in the CNMI.

S.E.A. director Dennis Tababa said "The Hafa Adai 5K continues to be a fundraiser for non-profit agencies in the CNMI. This year, PIC chose the Saipan Humane Society to help with their mission in finding solutions for the animal overpopulation. PIC has seen its



MARK RABAGO

Participants of last year's Hafa Adai 5K Color Fun Run are greeted with "holi powder" at the starting line.

fair share of stray cats and dogs on its property and this can be a safety issue for our guests and employees. With the help of Saipan Humane Society, we

can humanely catch and relocate the animals."

Safety manager Mark Caacbay said "It is important that we support organizations

like Saipan Humane Society to reduce the likelihood of stray animals to cause accidents on community members and visitors to our islands, di-

rectly or indirectly."

S.E.A. manager Reymark Castro said, "the Hafa Adai 5K has new and improved surprises this year. We continue to adjust every year after listening to you, CNMI! We promise to give you guys an amazing experience every time you say PIC. The Saipan Humane Society is one of the few organizations that we can run to when we need help with our furry friends. It is only just that we try and help them back in any way we can."

The race will start and finish at PIC Saipan and will feature five different coloring stations that has about 600 lbs of color powder along the Beach Road route. Participants are encouraged to wear white attire so that the full effect of the coloring stations can be seen post-race. Volunteers will be celebrating each runner's arrival by greeting

them with "holi powder." This is biodegradable mixture of corn starch and food coloring.

PIC is inviting the entire community to participate. The race fee is just \$12 and the first 1,000 entries will receive a commemorative event T-shirt. For this one-of-a-kind event, PIC Saipan is expecting 2,000 runners plus spectators. Post-race, PIC will be raffling more than \$5,000 worth of prizes which include PIC waterpark passes, Magellan lunches and brunches along with room stays and memberships to PIC Saipan. Visit PIC Saipan front office to register manually or scan the QR code below or go to the Raceroster.com registration page to register online!

PIC Saipan would like to thank event sponsors: Bridge Capital LLC, Triple J Saipan, Inc., and E-Land Group including Kensington Hotel Saipan and Coral Ocean Resort. (PR)

## Docomo Pacific donates \$5K to NMC Foundation



In support of higher education in the CNMI,

Docomo Pacific recently donated \$5,000 in cash and in-kind donations, including an Apple iPhone 15 Pro Max to the Northern Marianas College Foundation for the upcoming Golf Open on March 23 and 24, 2024.

"We are excited to see a brighter future for the CNMI through higher education, and by supporting this year's golf open, we're investing in a brighter future for our islands," said Docomo Pacific Brand manager Brent Deleon Guerrero. "Docomo Pacific is proud to support the NMC Golf Open with a \$5,000 contribution. This event embodies the spirit of community, and we're thrilled to be a part of it."

NMC's tournament will be a two-day event at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort and the tournament fee for the 2024 golf open is \$250.

"On behalf of the NMC Foundation, we are thankful for

Docomo Pacific's donation to our upcoming Golf Open," said Ben Babauta, chairperson of the NMC Foundation.

The tournament, which is also the signature event of the NMC Foundation, aims to raise funds to build and equip modern, innovative campus facilities that will help expand

the CNMI's workforce development efforts, stimulate economic growth, and provide access to quality education for the residents of the CNMI.

Like previous tournaments, this upcoming tournament will feature thousands of dollars in amazing prizes such as a 2024 Lexus RX350 from

Atkins Kroll, a 2023 Honda Civic Type R from Joeten Motors, a \$10,000 shopping spree from Top Shelf Wine and Spirits, a \$10,000 cash prize from Ambyth Shipping, a \$10,000 cash prize from Pacifica Insurance Underwriters, Inc., and a \$3,000 cash prize from McDonald's of Saipan.

Interested companies and individuals who would like to help the college with its rebuilding efforts can donate educational tax credit, cash, or in-kind contributions by visiting [www.marianas.edu/golf](http://www.marianas.edu/golf) or by contacting Helen Camacho at [helen.camacho@marianas.edu](mailto:helen.camacho@marianas.edu), Raynard Travilla at [raynard.travilla@marianas.edu](mailto:raynard.travilla@marianas.edu), or Miguel Dandan at [miguel.dandan@marianas.edu](mailto:miguel.dandan@marianas.edu).

Golfers who would like to register for the upcoming tournament can also visit [www.marianas.edu/golf](http://www.marianas.edu/golf). Only online payments are accepted for this upcoming golf open.

For more updates, follow Northern Marianas College on Facebook and Instagram ([nmc.proa](https://www.facebook.com/nmc.proa)) or visit [www.marianas.edu](http://www.marianas.edu). (PR)



NMC

Docomo Pacific recently donated \$5,000 to the Northern Marianas College Foundation, in support of its upcoming Golf Open on March 23 and 24, 2024. In photo with NMC president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero are Docomo Pacific CNMI Brand manager Brent Deleon Guerrero, Docomo Pacific Customer Service representative-lead Therese Santos, NMC Communications manager Miguel Dandan, and NMC Office of Student Activities and Leadership Program manager Maia Pangelinan.

## JANG

From page 16

Jang said she absolutely had a blast playing in the last tourney as the conditions were pretty much perfect for a relaxing round of golf.

"The wind and sunlight were so nice that day. The green was so fast in the first half of the east coast that it was hard for me to adjust. All the CWGA members played

very well, and it was a happy day to play with them," said the staff of New MJ Corp.

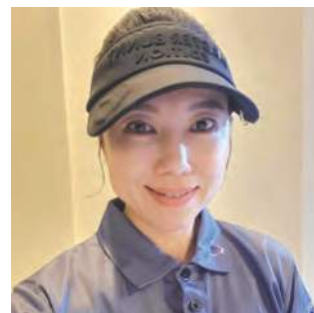
She then dedicated her win to her ever-supportive family and fellow members of CWGA.

"I want to share this win with all the members of CWGA and my loving family."

Coming in fourth to seventh, with their net scores in parenthesis, were Yuko Toga-

wa (79), Janet Torres (83), Lorraine Babauta (84), and Lydia Tan (84).

The club continues to look for new members as the new season continues. For those interested in becoming a member of CWGA or for more information, contact CWGA president Yuko Togawa at (670) 287-9856, vice president Lorraine Babauta at (670) 287-0621, or treasurer Lou Kim at (670) 783-7317.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CNMI Women's Golf Association February tourney winner Eunae Jang.

## CUKI

From page 16

that it was St Patrick's Day last Sunday, Team Green was able

to get the wins!" said Alvarez.

In the Novice Class, Christian Camacho also nipped Matthew Guerrero by winning Heat 2 to secure

the monthly plum after both came away with 47 points. Rasa then beat out Frankie Sablan for third place by also winning the final, heat after

both riders notched 38 points.

Results of the other divisions of the March race will be published in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

## JUNE

From page 16

against Lee after disposing of Anne Lee, 6-1, 6-0. Siwoo Lee, meanwhile, booked the championship round ticket following a 6-1, 6-2 victory over Hoo Wang.

In the boys 14, Jihun Park made a triumphant return to tennis by going 3-0 in the round-robin to earn the title. He first beat No. 1 seed Ian Chae, 4-4 (retired), before toppling second seed Matthew Hwang, 6-3, 7-5. He then completed his undefeated run in the tourney with a 6-2, 6-4 win over Cody Park.

Top seed Cody Park, meanwhile, ruled the boys 14 after defeating second seed Mi-

cheal Jeon, 6-4, 6-0. Park advanced to the finals with a 6-3, 6-0 victory over Matthew Zhu, while Jeon escaped Daniel Kang, 4-6, 6-3, 10-5.

In the 18 mixed doubles, La Hun Lam and Irin Chung dominated the division after a 2-0 record. They first took out Yu and Lina Tsukagoshi, 6-2, 6-1, before taking the championship with a 6-1, 6-0 triumph over Simon Tang and Serin Chung.

Results of the girls division and the mixed doubles 12 will be published in tomorrow's issue of *Saipan Tribune*.

The Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association organizes the 2024 Bridge Capital Tennis Classic.





**Magic clinch  
a play-in  
spot in 112-  
92 win over  
Hornets.**

**PAGE 14**

# Saipan Tribune Sports

**Hafa Adai  
5K Color  
Fun Run on  
April 6.**

**PAGE 15**



**16** THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2024

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

## June wins boys 16 championship

By MARK RABAGO  
mark\_rabago@saipantribune.com  
EDITOR

**J**une Yu made use of the experience he gained from competition in the previous months' Pacific Games and Junior Davis Cup to win the boys 16 title of last weekend's 2024 Bridge Capital Tennis Classic at the American Memorial Park.

The 16-year-old Mt. Carmel School student hacked out a 6-4, 6-1 victory over Siwoo Lee in the finals to complete the upset of the division's top seed. Yu entered the competition as the second seed.

"I felt happy when I beat the first seed. My strategy was to make the ball more in and to not try to get angry," he said.

Yu said after a nip-and-tick opening set, he finally was able to get some separation against Lee and that led to the straight-set win.

"It was kind of hard in the first set but in the second set I got used to the play style and started playing aggressively also," he said.

In a way, Yu admitted that the high level of play in the Solomon Islands, where the 2023 Pacific Games was held; and the Junior Davis Cup in Sri Lanka helped him in his finals match last Sunday.

"I think the experience from the Pacific Games and the Junior Davis Cup helped me a lot."

Yu advanced to the finals

See JUNE on Page 15



MARK RABAGO

June Yu, seen here in a file photo, won the boys 16 title of last weekend's 2024 Bridge Capital Tennis Classic at the American Memorial Park.

### Jang jamming in February tilt



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Eunae Jang, second from left, poses with fellow CNMI Women's Golf Association members after the February tourney last March 9 at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort east course.

By MARK RABAGO  
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EDITOR

Eunae Jang was victorious in the February tournament of the CNMI Women's Golf Association last March 9 at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort east course.

The 42-year-old golfer shot a net score 74 to humble a seven-women field for the monthly tiara.

Jang shot a 47 in the front nine and a 46 in the

back nine for a gross score of 93, which minus her 19-handicap, gave her the lowest score of the one-day competition.



Coming in second for the February tourney was Son Hyun with a post-handicap total of 75 following a gross of 85 (42-43). Completing the Top 3 was Kim See Hee with her 77 net score built around a gross of 85 (38-47) and handicap of 8.

See JANG on Page 15

By MARK RABAGO  
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EDITOR



Justis "Cuki" Alvarez barely beat Champi Villacanes in the Veterans Class of last Sunday's race in the 2024 "MOTO IV" Points Race Series at the Cowtown Race Park.

The 53-year-old boat captain finished tied with Villacanes in the March race with 47 points apiece, but ultimately took the checkered flag by winning the final heat.

Charles Cepeda completed the Top 3 with 40 points, while Ray Yumul and Ponce Rase wound up fourth and fifth with identical 34 points in this month's Marianas Racing Association tilt.

Alvarez said he's just lucky that he was able to pick up his first win of the season in the Veterans Class as Vil-

### Cuki edges Champi in Veterans Class

lacanas and Cepeda were tugging on his coattails.

"The racing was very competitive in the Veterans Class. Both Champi and Charles Cepeda were on the gas and kept me on my toes in both heats and it was a battle until

the last lap. It was hot and dry and very dusty. But track conditions were nice and groomed thanks to MRA president El-lery Cruz doing some nice touch ups mid-week," he said.

The Trench Tech Racing owner said he knew he had

fight in his hands when Villacanas took the pole position after Heat 1.

"Champi edged me out in the first heat on the last turn so I knew I had to beat him in Heat 2 to secure the overall. Last month, Tim Wenden from Guam won the overall in our class going 2-1. He didn't make it out this race so I am back in the points lead with seven rounds remaining."

He then went on to thank his family and sponsors for making his motocross career going.

"I dedicate this win and all my wins to my family and friends so that I can continue to inspire them at the ripe old age of 53 showing them that I can still go strong and enjoy racing for the long haul. My bike is a 2023 KXF250 (Kawasaki) from Cycles Plus Guam. They support and sponsor us. Being

See CUKI on Page 15



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Justis "Cuki" Alvarez is barely in the lead in the Veterans Class of the 2024 "MOTO IV" Points Race Series last Sunday at the Cowtown Race Park.